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Season 4: Issue 8 Monday 7th April 2008

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INSIDE THIS WEEK...

STH MELBOURNE POSTER

ASIAN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE PREVIEW

FOOTBALL FOCUS ON MAGICS AGIM SHERIFOVSKI

CAVS ON THE MARCH!

NIPPY NIKOLIC ON SONG

Photo: Peter Kakalias

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FAKE FANS SPOIL FOOTBALL

Cannons v Lions postponed after fracas

The Round 7 Foxtel Cup game between Oakleigh Cannons and Preston Lions was postponed during the week after the FFV received advice from the Victoria Police to not go ahead with the fixture.

The match was proposed to be played yesterday at Jack Edwards Reserve with an 11am kick-off, but a clash which occurred between a group of Preston Lions and South Melbourne fans at Ruthven Railway Station, shortly after the conclusion of their Foxtel Round 6 match last weekend, left two people needing medical attention and ensured that hooliganism raised its ugly head once again in Victorian football circles.

The FFV's decision to postpone the Cannons/Lions was based on Victorian Police intelligence which had reason to believe the game would be used as a vehicle for the individuals to participate in further anti-social behaviour.

The match will now be played at a later stage during the course of the season possibly on the catch-up round weekend or as a mid-week fixture. According to the FFV CEO Mark Rendell, "the match will definitely be played before the end of the season, but whether or not it is staged behind closed doors will be decided in due course after certain issues have been looked in to".

Last weekend's Preston/South game was the first time in three years the match was allowed to go ahead with an open turnstile policy after previous meetings had been played behind closed doors.

But, after the mindless actions of some individuals portraying themselves as football fans, the FFV will yet again have to be forced to readdress the situation.

In 2005 almost 10,000 fans turned up to Bob Jane Stadium in huge anticipation to watch the first league match between these two long standing rivals in approximately 10 years, but in an emotionally charged evening an almighty fracas between a number of opposition fans ensured the match made national headlines for all the wrong reasons.

Since then, the fixture has normally been played behind closed doors or only opens to members.

Speaking to Goal! Weekly in regards to the Cannons/Lions postponement FFV Chief Executive Officer Mark Rendell said, "Our goal is to have open fixtures because we want the true football fan to come along and support their clubs. What we don't want to have is games been used by people who aren't football supporters to come along and exhibit anti-social behaviour".

Asked whether or not future games between South Melbourne and Preston will once again be required to be played behind closed doors, Rendell said, "No, not necessarily. There's a number of games during the Victorian football calendar that are going to be deemed as "high risk" where we work with the host club and the opposition club, together with the police and security advisers to ensure the game goes off without a hitch."

"Preston versus South Melbourne would have been deemed to be a "high risk" game, but that game was played without incident in the actual venue - it was after the game and outside the ground where the incident occurred."

FFV CEO Mark Rendell

"Everything that the two teams did, the FFV did, the police and security firms did, ensured the game was played without incident. However, we can't control what happens after the game outside the venue. But we're speaking with the relevant authorities to try and minimise that occurring and to minimise games being put in jeopardy to have to be played behind closed doors. That's not our policy and we don't want to do it, but on the best advice of the people in the know, we've postponed the Cannons/Lions game to allow the passion and the rawness that occurred at the train station to dissipate and hopefully cool their heads.'

"Hopefully good planning will ensure we can avoid a repeat of this occurrence in the sport's endeavour to go forward."

Asked whether competition points might be docked or even fines issued to the Preston or South Melbourne, Rendell answered, "You can't hold the clubs responsible for what happened outside the ground. Risk assessments were made to manage the game with minimal incident, but it was the fact that after the game some people decided to take their issues further. The incident last weekend happened almost a kilometre away and it wasn't even close to the venue, so you can't blame the clubs for that. We will however be asking the clubs to try and identify the people involved and that action is taken against them. I know from talking to the two clubs, they don't want to be associated with these people or that sort of behaviour."

Rendell went on to add, "It portrays the sport in a bad light and it's frustrating for the clubs involved to have individuals who can't possibly be real supporters of the sport and who insist on damaging the brand of football. The reality is although this incident happened away from the football field the ramifications have a knock on effect to the sport."

'Ultimately the clubs will be the biggest losers because if the true fans are deterred from attending matches because they feel unsafe in certain environments, then the clubs will miss out on revenue in tickets sales, merchandise sales and canteen sales, and therefore
struggle to operate and pay players".

"It's a pity because out of the 2000 odd people who were at the game last weekend about 2% of those who attended made it into some thing it shouldn't be."

By James Taylor

Photos by Daniel Flis

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TOP (L-R) Ricky Diaco, Steven O'Dor, Nathan Caldwell, Shane Nunes, Gianni De Nittis.
BOTTOM (L-R) Sam Poutakidis, Goran Zoric, Fernando De Moraes, Ramazam Tavsancioglu, Tony Laverde, Dean Anastasiadis.

goal! Weekly

This week's line-up

Soccer Hotlines	3
Foxtel Cup Scoreboard	4
Knights v Coburg	5
Magic v Pines	6
Suburbs v AIS	7
Zebras v Eagles Preview	8
Blast From The Past	11
WPL Wrap	12
Football Focus	13
Bergers v Blues	14
South v Gully	15
Division One Wrap	16
Boo, Katsa & Tsigan	19 & 20
Asian Champions League	22
European Champions League	23
South Melbourne Poste	27

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Goal! Weekly endeavours to be as accurate as possible with everything it publishes.

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IRAQ GAME AT SUNCORP

Second ever World Cup Qualifier in Brisbane

Queensland's sporting fans will get their chance to support the Qantas Socceroos campaign to qualify for the 2010 FIFA World Cup after the announcement that Suncorp Stadium will host the blockbuster match between Australia and Iraq on Sunday 1 June, which will be presented by FOXTEL.

Australia got off to a great start on their qualification journey by defeating Qatar 3-0 in the opening match in Melbourne in February and a 0-0 draw away to China last week.

While the Qantas Socceroos lead their group of four, it will be vital that the team continues to win at home giving the match against Iraq huge significance. Only the top two teams from the group progress to the next stage of qualification.

"The FFA is delighted that the Qantas Socceroos will play their next World Cup qualifying match in Brisbane," said CEO Ben Buckley.

"Australia has only played one previous World Cup qualifier in Brisbane and that was in 1992 in a 2-0 win against Tahiti so we expect their will be huge anticipation ahead of this match."

"When the team played in a friendly match at Suncorp Stadium in 2006 there were almost 50,000 fans in attendance and gave the team a terrific acknowledgment of their success at the World Cup.

"We look forward to the Queensland fans inspiring the team towards the 2010 World Cup."

Iraq are the Champions of Asian having won the 2007 AFC Asian Cup, defeating Australia 3-1 in Bangkok en route to the championship.

Queensland Minister for Sport, Judy Spence, said this is sure to be big event for Queensland fans.

"This is a great opportunity for Queensland sports fans to witness a full strength Socceroos team attempting to qualify for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa," she said.

"Football is one of Queensland's most popular sports and football's popularity will continue to grow in Queensland on the back of this match.

"The popularity of the Queensland Roar continues to grow with this season's average crowd of 16,950 per match the second highest in the A-League.

"Suncorp Stadium is regarded as one of the best stadia around and I am sure Queenslanders will be out in force to support the Socceroos.

"This match will benefit the local economy through accommodation, hospitality, transport and other sectors. That's not to mention the fact Brisbane will be seen by millions of television viewers around the world," Ms Spence said.

The FFA also confirmed that the Qantas Socceroos will prepare for the match against Iraq with an international against Ghana at the Sydney Football Stadium on Friday 23 May and the final World Cup qualifier for this phase against China will be held at Sydney's ANZ Stadium on Sunday 22 June.

All the Qantas Socceroos matches will be shown live and exclusive on FOX SPORTS.

SOCCEROOS MATCH SCHEDULE

Australia v.Ghana
International Friendly
Friday 23 May 2008
Sydney Football Stadium, Sydney

Australia v. Iraq
2010 FIFA World Cup Qualification Match
Sunday 1 June 2008
Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane

Iraq v. Australia
2010 FIFA World Cup Qualification Match
Saturday 7 June 2008
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Qatar v. Australia
2010 FIFA World Cup Qualification Match
Saturday 14 June 2008
Doha, Qatar

Australia v. China
2010 FIFA World Cup Qualification Match
Sunday 22 June 2008
ANZ Stadium, Sydney

Australia vs. Iraq
2010 FIFA World Cup Qualification Match
Sunday 1st June 2008
Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane

SOCCEROOS TO PLAY GHANA

World Cup destiny could be decided in Sydney

The defining moment of the Australia's 2010 World Cup campaign could take place in Sydney after today's announcement of two blockbuster matches in May and June that will be presented by FOXTEL.

Australia will prepare for June's vital 2010 World Cup qualifiers with an international match against African heavyweights Ghana at Sydney Football Stadium on Friday 23 May which will be a fitting prelude to the prestigious FIFA Congress that meets in Australia on 29 and 30 May.

In addition, the final of four matches in the current phase of 2010 World Cup qualifying campaign will see the Qantas Socceroos up against China at ANZ Stadium on Sunday 22 June.

FOXTEL is principal presenting sponsor for both matches while FOX SPORTS will provide exclusive telecast coverage.

"The FFA is delighted that the May/June period will see football front and centre with the FIFA Congress and an exciting schedule of Qantas Socceroos matches," said CEO Ben Buckley.

"Ghana is one of the top 20 nations in the world and will provide us with ideal preparation ahead of the four vital World Cup qualifiers to follow."

Ghana has long been regarded one of the top nations in African football and, in addition to reaching the final 16 at the 2006 World Cup, they have been crowned African champions on four occasions. The 'Black Stars', who are currently the highest ranked African team at 15, boast a number of major European-based stars including Michael Essien (Chelsea), Sulley Muntari (Portsmouth) and Stephen Appiah (Fernerbahce).

"I'd like to acknowledge the support of the NSW Government which has proved once again to be great supporters of football," Buckley added.

In the first two matches of the 2010 qualification journey, Australia defeated Qatar 3-0 in the opening match in Melbourne in February, and drew 0-0 away to China last week.

If Australia finishes in the top two in the group they currently lead, they will progress to the fourth and final phase of Asian qualifying where they will be in a group of five nations with the top two progressing to the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

The FFA also confirmed that the first of the four World Cup qualifying games to be held in June will be against Iraq at Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium on Sunday 1 June.

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FOXTEL CUP STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Oakleigh Cannons	7	5	2	0	10	3	17
Melbourne Knights	7	4	3	0	14	6	15
Richmond Eagles*	6	4	2	0	18	6	14
Green Gully Cavaliers	7	4	2	1	9	4	14
A.I.S	7	4	1	2	14	9	13
Altona Magic	7	3	3	1	10	7	12
Preston Lions	6	2	2	2	10	11	8
Heidelberg Utd	7	1	4	2	10	11	7
Coburg Utd	7	2	1	4	8	12	7
South Melbourne	7	2	0	5	9	11	6
Western Suburbs	7	2	0	5	4	14	6
Whittlesea Zebras*	6	1	2	3	7	12	5
Fawkner Blues	8	1	2	5	7	18	5
Frankston Pines	7	0	2	5	5	11	2

RESULTS

Oakleigh Cannons	P - P	Preston LIons
Altona Magic	1 - 0	Frankston Pines
Coburg United	0 - 2	Melbourne Knights
South Melbourne	0 - 3	Green Gully
Western Suburbs	1 - 0	AIS
Heidelberg United	2 - 3	Fawkner Blues
Whittlesea Zebras	*Playing Tonight*	Richmond Eagles

UNDER 21 DETAILS

Coburg Utd 1 Melbourne Knights 1, Altona Magic 1 Frankston Pines 0, Western Suburbs 0 V.I.S 0, Heidelberg Utd 0 Fawkner Blues 1, South Melbourne 0 Green Gully Cavaliers 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Richmond	6	6	0	0	19	5	18
Green Gully Cavaliers	7	6	0	1	14	3	18
V.I.S	7	3	3	1	12	7	12
Melbourne Knights	7	3	2	2	10	14	11
Coburg Utd	7	3	1	3	9	8	10
Oakleigh Cannons	7	2	3	2	9	8	9
Frankston Pines	7	2	2	3	5	8	8
Whittlesea Zebras	6	2	1	3	11	11	7
Fawkner Blues	7	3	1	3	7	10	7
Preston Lions	6	2	1	3	6	9	7
South Melbourne	7	1	3	3	6	10	6
Altona Magic	7	2	0	5	7	12	6
Heidelberg Utd	7	1	1	5	10	16	4
Western Suburbs	6	1	2	3	3	7	2

THE TOP MARKSMEN

Player, Club	Goals
Naidovski, Jason A.I.S	8
Curcija, Michael Altona Magic SC	7
Cardozo, Pablo Richmond SC	6
Nikolic, Joel Green Gully	5
Catalano, Michael Richmond SC	4
Danning, Kofi D A.I.S	4
Josifovski, Alexander Coburg United FC	4
Lagana, Frankie M Oakleigh Cannons FC	4
Cardozo, Richard Richmond SC	4
De Moraes, Fernando South Melbourne FC	3
Gasparis, Marino D Pre...	

goal! Weekly

ROUND EIGHT FIXTURES

RICHMOND EAGLES
V
FRANKSTON PINES
Kevin Bartlett Reserve
Fri 11 Apr KO 8:30PM

GREEN GULLY
V
OAKLEIGH CANNONS
Green Gully Reserve
Sat 12 Apr KO 4:00PM

ALTONA MAGIC
V
HEIDELBERG UTD
Paisley Park
Sat 12 Apr KO 6:30PM

FAWKNER BLUES
V
COBURG UTD
CB Smith Reserve
Sun 13 Apr KO 3:00PM

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS
V
SOUTH MELBOURNE
Knights Stadium
Sun 13 Apr KO 3:00PM

PRESTON LIONS
V
A.I.S
BT Connor Reserve
Sun 13 Apr KO 3:00PM

WESTERN SUBURBS
V
WHITTLESEA ZEBRAS
Ralph Reserve
Sun 13 Apr KO 3:00PM

Please check the
FFV website
for any fixture changes.

COBURG UNITED

0 - 2

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

ROLL UP! IT'S THE BARESIC SHOW!

Knights dispose woeful Coburg

A Barasic double secured a vital 2-0 win for the Melbourne Knights against their co-tenants Coburg United, on a windy Saturday night at Knights Stadium.

Joe Montemurro waved the axe after last week's poor showing against the Cavaliers, making three changes to his squad, Tichy, Rocco and Richards all lost their spot in the starting line-up, while Harrhy, Gurpinar and Thompson were brought back in. The Knights fielded an unchanged line-up, however were still missing key players in Kuna, Piorkowski and Milardovic who is out for the entire season. Watson and Spiteri recovered from their recent setbacks to take their place on the bench.

The fixture indicated this was Coburg's home game, but it was the Knights who burst out of the blocks, creating early midfield pressure. Matkovic put in an early cross which was met by Barasic, the on-form striker couldn't hit the target on this occasion.

As early as the 2nd minute Barasic found himself between the defence and the goal, only for the on rushing Hrehoresin to clear before the striker could pounce.

Coburg manufactured their first shot on goal in the 5th minute, Harrhy sent his long shot over the bar. However it was the Knights who took the lead only a minute later, a Matkovic corner caused confusion between the Coburg keeper and his defender who both missed it, gifting Barasic with an easy goal, although he may have not known much about it.

Even with the likes of star players, Magnacca, Gilmour and Mustafa, the Coburg midfielders were largely ineffective, giving the ball away on numerous occasions and not providing the attackers with much opportunity to mount any serious attack. This was adamant as Coburg were restricted to long shots, Thompson saw his shot from outside the box sail high and wide, before Magnacca tried his luck from distance with the same result.

The Knights spurned a glorious chance to double their lead, when a good cross from the left by Petrevski found the unmarked Pelikan at the far post, his volley went agonisingly wide. However the Knights did double their lead in the 23rd minute, when Barasic showed the opposition forwards how to shoot from outside the box, sending his dipping shot under the body of Hrehoresin.

Andy Vlahos had the chance to reply within minutes, when he beat the offside trap, but as he tried to shoot he miss-hit his attempt, which wrong footed Ozdemir, the Knights keeper was still able to parry the shot wide.

Shining Knights: Dario Matkovic, Andrew Baresic and Ivan Franjic celebrate an important away victory against Foxtel Cup newcomers Coburg United at Knights Stadium on Saturday.

Coburg created the first chance in the second half, when Harrhy sent a low ball across the face of goal, but Vlahos' lunging effort was unable to find the target. The TheThe Coburg midfield lacked the precision and struggled to string passes together, succumbing easily and giving away possession once pressure was applied.

Montemurro attempted to change things up, introducing Richards for Mustafa. This didn't seem to change much as the Knights searched for the killer blow, Petrevski saw his header superbly tipped over, and minutes later found the side netting from yet another header.

The man who Montemurro brought on to change the game, was then substituted after only 20 minutes, Richards who didn't seem to be injured took out his frustration on the fence. Magnacca had Coburb's best chance to score, when his free-kick cannoned back off the bar in the 80th minute.

Petrevski had a penalty claim turned down nearing stoppage time, after he was challenged in the box, the referee however saw different, handing out a yellow card for diving.

The win was much deserved for the Knights, however it was more of how poor Coburg were, as they try and find a way to snap their winless streak. They will have their chance when they face relegation threatened Fawkner Blues next week, while the Knights are at home against long-time rivals South Melbourne.

MATCH STATS:
SHOTS ON: CU 1, MK 4.
SHOTS OFF: CU 6, MK 8
CORNERS: CU 3, MK 4

Line Ups:

Coburg: Hrehoresin, Pir, Josifovski, Vlahos, Magnacca, Gilmour (Sumbul 82'), Kovacevic, Mustafa (Richards 60', (Garcia 78'), Gurpinar, Harrhy, Thompson.

Yellow Cards: Vlahos 69'.
Red cards: None

Melbourne Knights: Ozdemir, Iosifidies, Grbesa, Matkovic, Pelikan, Timmonds, Petrevski (Cuze 90'), Barasic (Spiteri 70'), Franjic, Kirazoglou, Elvin.
Scorers: Baresic 7', 23".

Yellow Cards: Franjic 58', Matkovic 79', Ozdemir 81', Petrevski 89'.
Red cards: None

Man of the Match:
Andrew Barasic
(Melb Knights)

Crowd: 2000
Venue: Knights Stadium

By Andrew Fisher

Photos by Steve starek

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ALTONA MAGIC

1 - 0

FRANKSTON PINES

MAGIC SNEAKS PAST BRAVE PINES

Pines still searching for first win

Altona Magic have bounced back to the winners list after defeating Frankton Pines by 1-0 at Paisley Park Soccer Complex on Saturday night.

The three points to the home side came courtesy of a Pece Cergovski strike in the 57th minute resigning Pines to its fifth loss in seven outings and leaving the peninsula side still searching for its first win of the 2008 Foxtel Cup campaign.

The match was watched by approximately 400 spectators, some of whom would surely have been left wondering why the Pines were still winless after they gave a good account of themselves, showing great spirit and endeavour to be competitive in a fairly even contest.

Chances fell to both sides throughout the evening, but it was the steady performances of both keepers, Altona's Bojo Jevdjevic and Pines' Nick Raganovic, that kept the match evenly poised until the deadlock was broken by Cergovski.

Magic coach Vlado Tortevski was pleased with the victory which kept his side firmly established in the Top Six, "First of all, based on this performance, I don't think Frankston Pines deserves to be in the position they're in at the moment. They appear to have a goods set of players who pushed us all the way to the end and I really don't know how they've ended up where they are on the ladder. They gave us a really hard game, playing very open football with plenty of determination. There were many times, especially in the first half when they had us under a lot of pressure."

The deciding goal came after a sweeping move from midfield involving most of the magic players with some impressive passing and movement culminated in Carl Recchia playing through Henry Fa'arado into space, who then chased the ball before switching across the box, finding Cergovski who took a touch to tee himself up before burying the ball past Roganovic with an excellent finish from approximately 20 yards out from the goal.

Tortesvaki was obviously please with the result and his team's performance and went on to add, "It was much better performance from us compared to last Saturday. Full credit must go to the players who really came out to win this game. It was definitely one of those games where we had to win in order to remain in the Top Six and keep in touch with the pacesetters. We've got a couple of games coming up and we're already thinking about Heidelberg United next week."

The night also saw possibly one of the youngest players to ever take the field in a Foxtel Cup match.

With the backing of president Melissa Fisher-Massa, Altona Magic recently launched a Youth Academy at Paisley Park with a view to nurture talented young local footballers for the future. It appears the move is paying dividends already as Young Joey George Lambadaridis took his place on the bench, while 14 year old Jake Barker-Daish came on the park for his senior debut after replacing prolific striker Micheal Curcija in the dying minutes of the match.

Tortevski said about Jake's debut, "I'm really proud of that moment because he is an outstanding talent and I think he has the potential to go all the way. Although we need the results, at the same time we are committed to giving young players a chance to develop."

Match Details

Altona Magic:
B.Jevdjevic, S.Mrkela, C.Anthopoulos, S.Laurie, D.Mladenovic, H.Fa'arodo, C.Recchia, M.Curcija (J.Barker-Daish 89'), P.Siveski, A.Sherifovski, P.Cergovski (C.Rachovski 77').

Scorers: Cergovski 57'.

Yellow cards: Fa'arodo 23', Sherifovski 82'.
Red cards: None

Frankston Pines:
B.Raganovic, L.Trebbia, T.Malcolm (D.Black 26'), R.Duckworth, A.Skledar (C.Jones 77'), C.Smart, J.Reichnein (B.Ovcin 70'), A.Fadljevic, C.Leopold, N.Waite, E.Masi.

Scorers: None

Yellow cards: None.
Red Cards: None

Man of the match:
B.Jevdjevic
(Altona Magic)

Crowd: 400
Venue: Paisley Park

By James Taylor

Photos by Daniel Flis

Altona Magic's Man of the Match Bojo Jevdjevic clears the danger from the penalty area on one of the numerous occassions Frankston Pines penetrated his goal on Saturday night.

WESTERN SUBURBS

1 - 0

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF SPORT

MURPHY'S LAW FOR AIS

Suburbs finally breaks its duck

During the week the Foxtel Cup witnessed the first coach casualty for the season when Kon Pappas and Western Suburbs parted ways. In stepped former Socceroo Ken Murphy take the helm and return to the VPL hoping to turnaround Western suburbs fortunes before it was too late in the season to avoid a relegation battle. Heading into this match Western Suburbs were still seeking its first win for the season.

Western Suburbs started this game the brightest and in the early exchanges they simply wanted the game more than the youngsters from the Institute, Suburbs were attacking in waves and the AIS kids weren't adjusting to the game early on. Suburbs however overplayed a lot of their chances early on and it left many people wondering if the homer side would later rue their misses.

An early ball played over found the AIS defence sleeping and three Suburbs players broke on goal, Vas Kalegeracos played the ball over the 'keeper but the ball didn't have the strength to go to goals and the Suburbs player who chased it down was forced too wide to get a meaningful shot in on goal. Soon after a corner played across was cleared off the line for the AIS by Matthew Theodore and from the clearance Lorenz Kidtner was guilty of a glaring miss.

At this point Suburbs were all over the Institute lads and another chance went to waste when Dimitri Hatzimouratis beat a hesitant Mark Birghitti in the AIS goals but the ball went wide. Soon after this however the AIS picked their play up and saw a free kick whipped into the Suburbs box and a rasping shot was well saved by Stephan Gal. The ball then travelled right up the other end and Birghitti in the AIS goal pulled off a smart save of his own to preserve the stalemate.

The AIS keeper was a bit hesitant in this game when dealing with high balls and sometimes his judgment was questionable at times. Vas Kalegeracos had another chance when the keeper came for a ball, but hesitated and again he put the ball wide. The final chance of the half was right on the final kick when Vas Kalegeracos again popped up and tried a somewhat speculative shot which Birghitti in the AIS goals made a complete hash of and the resulting fumble trickled onto the post and away for a corner much to the relief of the poor boy in the AIS. The game was goalless at the break.

Suburbs were finally rewarded for their dominance early into the second half when a series of slick passing by the Suburbs team saw a move that involved a good few passes finished with a low shot across Birghitti by Tomi Razov - much to the pleasure of the Suburbs players and the home crowd. The relief on the face of Ken Murphy was also obvious. Just after the goal the AIS seemed rocked by the concession of a goal and almost conceded a second when an absolute thunderbolt of a shot from outside of the box went high and wide.

In the middle of the second half the only real threat to the lead Suburbs had worked so hard to get was themselves as the AIS weren't really creating clear cut opportunities for their forwards. Lazy defending by Evan Karavetis saw him leave a ball for Stephan Gal but the AIS forward cut in and got the ball and shot at goal. Gal saw the danger coming making himself big and saving smartly with his feet at the edge of his box. The AIS had numerous chances and the young lad Kofi Danning out on the flank was really troubling the Suburbs defence, he put in a number of crosses into the box which lead to half chances and shots which were pretty much dealt with by the Suburbs defence.

Suburbs held out for the rest of the game and there was both celebrations and relief that Suburbs had weathered the storm and that they had picked up three vital points in their quest to remain in the Foxtel Cup. Murphy I am sure will be greatly pleased that Suburbs picked up the three points but I am sure he will concede that Suburbs were wasteful and probably should have had the game in the bag long before they scored their goal. The AIS will need to improve and create more if they are to cause sides trouble.

This coming week Western Suburbs welcome Whittlesea to Ralph Reserve whilst the AIS travel to the BT Connor Reserve to take on last season's champion the Preston Lions. The reserve game finished in a goalless draw between Western Suburbs and the Victorian Institute of Sport.

AIS youngster Ante Cicak skips past the outstretched foot of Nicola Roama during yesterday clash at Ralph Reserve. It was Suburbs' first win after seven rounds of the Foxtel Cup.

Match Details:

Western Suburbs:
S.Gal, J.Cvetanovski, E.Karavitis, A.Bonis, L.Kindtner, I.Razov, T.Razov N.Roama 82'), V.Kalogeracos (M.Batur 73'), D.Hatzimouratis, E.Centkin.

Scorers: T.Razov 54'.

Yellow cards: Kindtner 82, T.Razov 35'.
Red cards: None

AIS:
M.Birighitti, D.Mullen, L.De Vere, A.Cicak (I.Pavlov 63'), R.Greer (S.Munro 59'), A.Sunasky, M.Theodore, J.Naidovski, K.Danning, J.Hoffman.

Scorers: None

Yellow cards: Munro 61'.
Red cards: None

Crowd: 500
Venue: Ralph Reserve

By Reuben Schembri

Photo by Daniel Flis

WHITTLESEA ZEBRAS

V

RICHMOND EAGLES

EAGLES EYE ZEBRAS

MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL

Tonight at Epping KO 8.15pm

Monday Night Football at Epping Stadium sees Whittlesea Zebras host Richmond. Both sides enter the game on the back of wins 3-2 away wins in Round Six, the Zebras victorious at Altona Magic and the Eagles triumphant at Western Suburbs.

Whittlesea's win at Altona got their season back on track after a dismal start to the campaign for last year's beaten Grand Finalists. It seemed the notable departures of Kristian Rees, Tex Apostolikas and Hamlet Armenian had left the Zebras a shadow of their former selves. Jerry Karpeh, signed from Perth Glory, has started to find the net and with Goran Talevski also starting to find form they held-off a late rally from the Magic to record their first win of the season. Kenny Gerohristodoulou was sent off late in the game, with former Richmond keeper Robbie Simioni coming on to help the Zebras to the win. No doubt Simioni will be relishing the prospect of starting against his old team.

Conversely, Richmond have made their best start ever in the Foxtel Cup. Unbeaten and sitting in second-place going into the round, the Eagles will venture to Epping keen for a result that will keep them up with the early pacesetters. The free-scoring outfit from Kevin Bartlett Reserve have scored eighteen goals in six games, with Pablo Cardozo, Richie Cardozo and Michael Catalano making it three Eagles in the top five Foxtel Cup goalscorers.

In their first season under Michael Chatzitrifonos, the Eagles have shown marked improvement but now face another stern test.

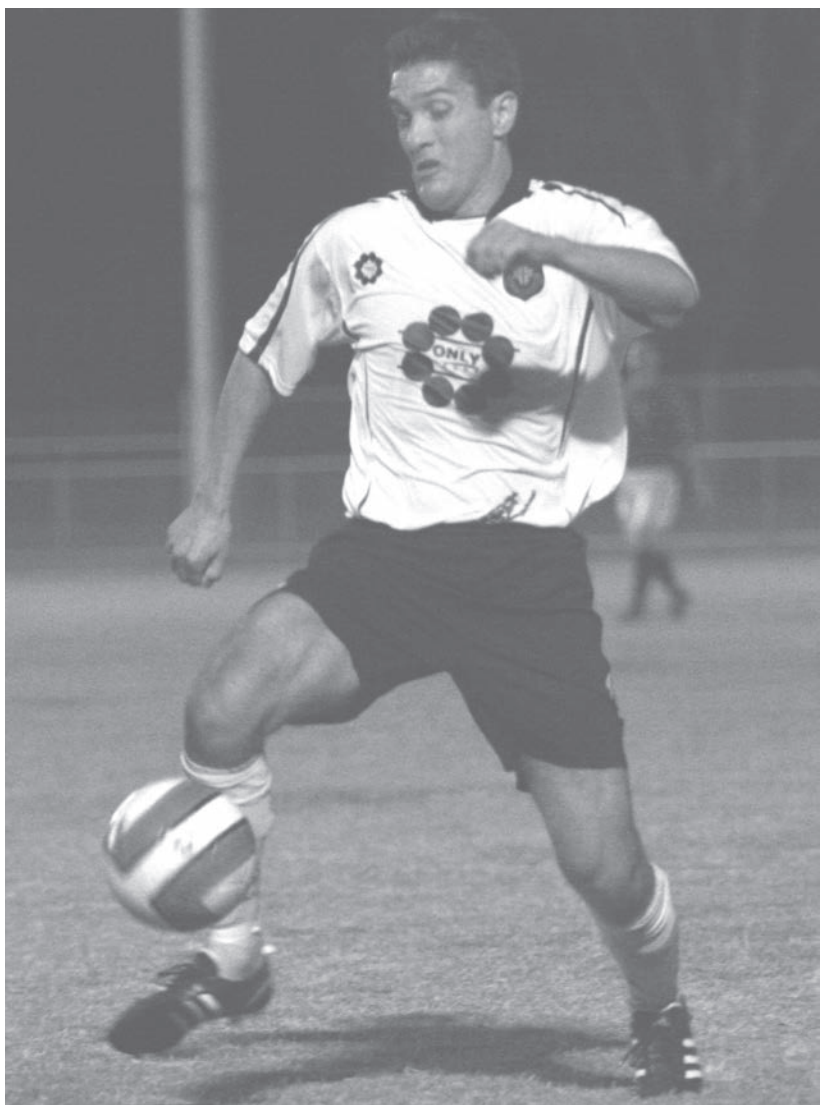
Last season the two clubs played out home wins in their clashes. It was a 2-0 win at Epping in July that propelled Whittlesea to their charge into the finals, and began the run of poor results for Richmond which would lead to them battling to avoid relegation.

The two sides go into the game with a break of more than seven days, but Richmond will have to back up with a home game against Frankston Pines on Friday night. This could have an influence on team selection and be a test of the squad's depth. The Zebras won't have to play again until going to Western Suburbs on Sunday.

As always, the Epping Stadium surface is near enough to the best in the business. It should allow for a great game between two quality VPL sides.

By Mark Boric

Photo by John Punshon



Former NSL star Pablo Cardozo has already found the net three times this season and will look to further his tally tonight against the Zebras.

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Maccabi-Hakoah

A FOOTBALL JOURNEY CONTINUES

President Pillemer to write next chapter in Hakoah history

In the early dawn, the compact frame of diminutive evergreen Maccabi- Hakoah midfielder, Jon Pillemer, can be observed scaling the heights of New South Head Road in Double Bay.

It is like every season is his City to Surf as he prepares for another year of senior football and his fifth season as club captain.

For the man who celebrated his fortieth birthday at the end of last year, the pre-season routine of running from Double Bay to Vaucluse is second nature in his physical preparation.

On the seven kilometre run to Vaucluse and back to Double Bay ,Jon Pillemer has time to reminisce his life in football and contemplate what the future promises.

"Five times a week on this trek seems a real grind but at my age it's important I maintain the highest level of fitness to compete with players who are many years younger."

"My thoughts often drift back to participation in my first of five Maccabiah Games in Israel during 1987,when as a twenty year old I was selected with my two brothers, Michael and Russell to play for Australia

During the recent pulsating 4-4 draw in the English Premier League between Tottenham Hotspur and Chelsea at White Hart Lane, the memories came flooding back for the former Spurs youth team player who was the 1984 South African youth player of the year.

Although Spurs never signed him to a senior contract in 1984, Pillemer returned to trial at Charlton Athletic in the English autumn of 1988 when he caught the eye of the manager, Lennie Lawrence, who was keen to sign him due to some excellent performances in the Combination League. Unfortunately, due to work permit problems, he was forced to come back to Australia.

However, Pillemer was never one to dwell on the past and for a number of years made his mark in State League football when he won the NSW Super League Player of the Year award in consecutive years, 1992 and 1993.

His former coach at Leichhardt Tigers, former Socceroo star, Manfred Schaefer, in 1993 had this to say about his star performer.

"Jon gives 100% and is a non-stop performer with tremendous dedication to his sport."

It was accolades like this which were instrumental in Pillemer being one of only three Jewish players along with John Foxman(Sydney City)and Phil Moss (Northern Spirit) to play in the National Soccer League when he was signed for Brunswick Juventus where he made sixteen full appearances during the 1993/94 season.

There have been many highlights in an extensive career where he has played with and against many well known local players but he particularly has fond memories of playing at Wollongong during 1996 in the Super League with Scott Chipperfield and Mile Sterjovski who both played in the 2006 World Cup finals for the Socceroos.

"The memories of playing at a high level will remain with me for many years but I still hope to continue with Maccabi Hakoah for a few seasons yet", says Pillemer.

Who would deny this ambition as last year he won the club player of the year award for the second time in three years. Unlike many players who drift from sport in their twilight years of active competition, Pillemer at the end of last season accepted a new challenge in his sporting life.

He was elected as the senior president of Maccabi Hakoah Soccer Football Club in an exciting new phase of the club's history.

When the Hakoah licensed club first sponsored the Maccabi football club in 1993 and also added it's name to the club's logo there was great hope for the revival of the famous days of the 1960's and 1970's when Hakoah club was a leading light in N.S.W. and Australian football .

Since 1993 there have been successes but at last there has been a meeting of minds which will steer the course of events in the future.

At the end of last season, a vacancy opened in the NSW Youth Development League and Maccabi – Hakoah was given the opportunity to fill the void which was grabbed with open arms. For the first time young Maccabi- - Hakoah players will be able to represent the club from u/13-u/18 level at the highest representative level in NSW which will avoid the need to play elsewhere to graduate in the game .

The formation of a four man football board to oversee these developments is a first in the club's history and the incumbents Pillemer (Senior Club President), Danny Hochberg(Junior President), John Meyers(Futsal President) and Phil Filler (Hakoah Licensed Club) have created a unity never witnessed before.

" The u/18's will run as an academy under the supervision of senior coach, Andrew Prentice, and every week at least three of them will train with the senior squad and be given the opportunity to play in the u/20 senior competition ." says Pillemer.

" If they perform well they will be given further chances to play in the senior competition which will continue the policy of promoting youth from last year when we had seven players, twenty years and under in the first team squad"

"A big future is predicted for players like Jordan Mundell, Danny Rabie and Daniel Joseph who played regularly in first grade last year and will form the nucleus of the first team squad for years to come".

"We are actively seeking promotion to the 1st Division next year and I believe the new initiatives will be critical in realising this aim."

The man who a few years ago was nominated in the Jewish Football Team of the Century next to immortals like Peter Fuzes, Robbie Fekete and Jules Forgacs is laying the foundations for a return to the the glory days of Hakoah SFC and his efforts can only be beneficial for Jewish sport in Sydney.

Pillemer's commitment to his cause can be best described by former Socceroo and Maccabi Hakoah coach, Kimon Taliadoros.

"Jon has this special ability to motivate others, an undying enthusiasm and optimism and a desperation to succeed both on and off the pitch which is a reflection of his professional training at the highest level."

The Maccabi Hakoah Committee. From left to right :Jamie Enoch, Anthony Milner, Jonathan Pillemer (President), Michael Evans, Larry Mendelowitz (Vice President), Anthony Chesle, Jonathan Milner, Mark Hasson.

By Roger Sleeman

Photo by Roger Sleeman

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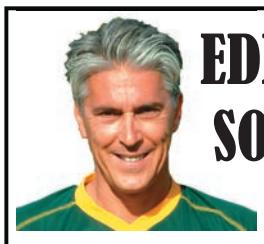

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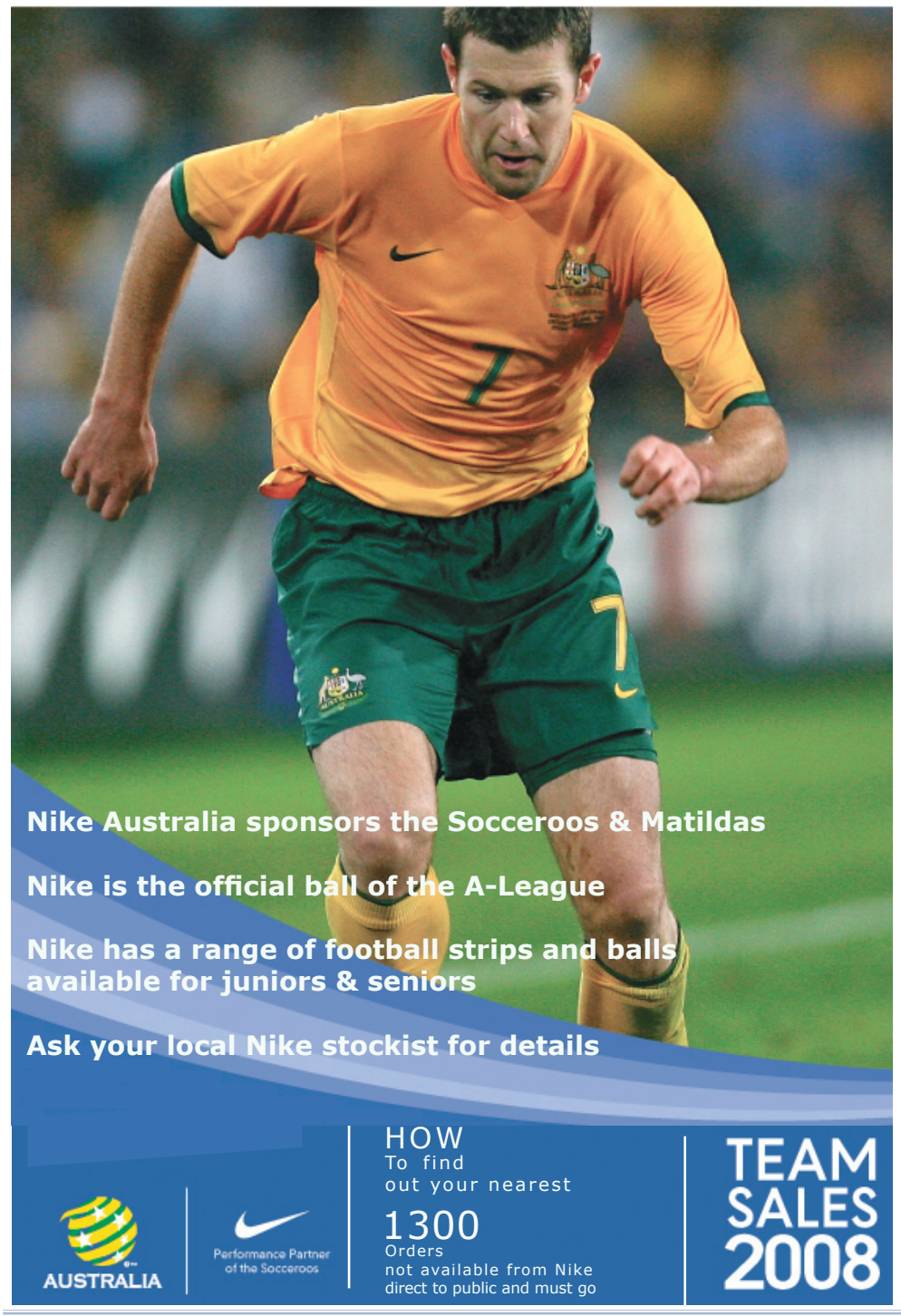
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PASSING OF ANOTHER LOCAL LEGEND

Angus Drennen (1924-2008)

DRENNEN'S DECORATIVE CAREER

Pioneer of Victorian football departs for Heaven XI

'I had to go back to Scotland to discover that I was an Australian, not a Scot living in Australia.'

So said Angus Drennen, one of the country's earliest post-war internationals who died last week at the age of 84. Angus Drennen won three full caps for Australia on the tour of New Zealand in 1948 and 20 caps in all and represented Victoria many times in a career which lasted more than 30 years.

Born in Sunshine in 1924, Angus Drennen was the son of a Scottish immigrant who worked as a piecework grinder at the Sunshine Harvester Company. Angus attended Sunshine Primary School and then Sunshine Technical College, where he remembers seeing a photograph of a soccer team dating from the First World War.

A sports all-rounder he played his early soccer with Albion Schoolboys, which was run by Bill Bowman and his wife, then went on to join Nobels juniors and even got a game with the seniors at 16.

He did an apprenticeship with the Victorian Railways but at the end of the Second World War quickly left to work as an independent contractor for the Housing Commission in Gippsland.

His senior career had a strange start because he was at the railway station en route to sign for Brighton when he met a friend Harry Taylor who persuaded him instead to join Prahran. Harry told him, 'You'll get a game for the reserves.' But it was Angus who got the first team spot and Harry played reserves. At Prahran, Angus played with Ron Taylor, who also represented Australia. Alex Kerr, a former player, was on the committee and the secretary was Frank McIvor who had had a stellar career for Yallourn.

When Sunshine United started up, his local loyalties led to his return and he helped the club to the First Division championship in 1950, after it flirted with relegation the previous year. His excellent form as wing half led to his selection for the Australian tour of New Zealand in 1948 and in 1949 he represented Victoria in a superb one-all draw with Hajduk Split. He was a regular selection in the state team until 1954.

His next club move was in 1952 to Footscray JUST where he was paid £3 a week for playing and £1 for training and was made club captain. He had played for Victoria in an interstate carnival and against England in 1951 with Steve Zakomarok of JUST. Angus found that he and Zakomarok could read each other's play. 'We had a good sense of football,' he said and so the move to JUST was smooth, except when in an early game JUST got a penalty, which he said Steve should take. As Zakomarok placed the ball, the regular kicker rushed up and blasted the ball over the corner flag!

From JUST Angus moved to Brighton and then to Hakoah where the Dockerty Cup was won. Then Victorian coach Len Young asked him to become assistant coach and mentor to the Victorian Colts side where a young Ted Smith was beginning his career. Angus Drennen remembers, 'I was never fitter in my life than when I was with the Victorian Colts. But I wasn't a great communicator, even though I never stopped talking on the pitch.'

Angus Drennen clears the ball.
Soccer News, 22 July 1950, p. 1.

Angus Drennen on the run for Victoria.
Soccer News, 9 April 1960, p. 1.

Later he moved to Moreland. In 1959 Angus took over from Andy McCulloch as player-coach at Box Hill and helped to keep the team in the State League. He also won the Argus Medal that year. His daughters went to university and Angus decided that if they could do a degree, so could he. His football career continued with the university's lower league teams until 1978 when he was 54.

When I talked to Angus about fifteen years ago he told me that his remaining ambition was to go back to Scotland and spend three months in a boarding house in a city close to football grounds and to live every day at the football. I don't know whether he ever managed it, but the notion conveys his deep love for the game and his willingness to continue learning more about it.

Sunshine United, Division One champion 1950.
Back row: left to right: Mr J Penlerick (not shown), Jock Taylor, J Hunter, B Doherty, J Roberts, R Clayton, A Kyle, W Evans, J Campbell.
Front row: A Harraden, Les Bird, Angus Drennen, Lin Bird, R Lowe.
Source: Soccer News, 23 September 1950, p. 1.

Words by Roy Hay

Photos provided by Roy Hay

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Round 3

THREE WAY TIE AT THE TOP

Inter, Sandy, Preston make it three from three!

Defence seems to have played a major role in Round 4 of the WPL, with five of the six victorious teams managing a shut out of their opponents on their way to victory. The results leave the competition with four teams yet to drop a point, and, unsurprisingly, these teams occupy the top four positions on the ladder. The competition has a strange look to it at this early stage of the season, with perennial finals contenders Casey Comets and Keilor Park inhabiting the bottom two rungs of the ladder.

Box Hill Inter maintained its perfect start to the season, and made it three wins from three with a 2-0 victory over Eltham North at Wembley Park on Friday night. A goal in each half, first from Georgia Koutrouvelis, and then from Jessica Humble, was enough for Inter to subdue its opposition and claim the points. Box Hill's strong start to the year is nothing new, but aside from winning matches, it is also yet to concede a goal, and so occupies a familiar position at the top of the ladder. Eltham has enjoyed a less positive beginning to the 2008 campaign, having lost both of its matches to date. It sits in tenth position on the ladder,

Another club enjoying a stellar start to its season is Sandringham, which defeated South Melbourne 3-0 at RJ Sillitoe Reserve on Saturday afternoon. Jocelyn Murdoch continued her goal-scoring streak by opening the scoring in the first half, with Alina Kapusta adding a second on the stroke of half time. A third by Sarah White in the second half shut the door on the visiting side, and ensured Sandringham would record its third straight victory, and enjoy its best start to a season since joining the WPL, and also yet to concede a goal. After a blistering first round display, South Melbourne seems to have go off the boil, failing even to score in its last two matches. Sandringham finished the round in second position on the ladder, with South's goal difference enabling it to maintain respectability in sixth.

GSL had a week off to recover from the disappointment of its heavy Round 1 defeat, and it bounced back in style to post a comprehensive victory over Eastern Lions at La Trobe City Sports Club on Saturday. The home side scored twice in each half, with Mollie Emond and Elizabeth Heeger both grabbing a brace. The beginning of the season has not been kind to Eastern Lions, with it snatching a draw minutes before the blackout in Round 1, followed by two consecutive 4-0 defeats. With one point to show for its efforts to date, Eastern Lions is ninth on the ladder, while GSL climbs off the bottom and in to seventh.

Preston Lions also has yet to drop a point, and this weekend it accounted for Bendigo Vipers. In similar fashion to last week's victory over South, Preston has Peta Lipec to thank for securing the points, as she scored her fourth goal in three games to give the home side a 1-0 victory at BT Connor Reserve. However, as it has been slightly less prolific in front of goal than its fellow perfect starters, Preston occupies third position on the ladder. Bendigo was denied a victory in its opening match by a late Eastern Lions goal, and was not in action last weekend, so has one point from two games so far, and is eighth on the ladder.

Heidelberg United scored four times for the second consecutive match to inflict Casey Comets' third straight defeat of the season and leave it languishing near the foot of the ladder. In a round dominated by teams winning while holding their opponents goalless, it was refreshing to find a high-scoring game in which both sides found the net. Heidelberg seemed to all but have the points in the bag by half time, having scored three times to its host's once. The second half proved more even, with both sides adding one further goal, enabling Heidelberg to run out to a 4-2 lead. Both sides had multiple goal scorers, with Linda Restrepo notching both of Casey's, and Lucy Balta and Chrissy Baxendale each grabbing a pair for United. The result means Casey ends the round in eleventh position on the ladder, having endured its worst ever start to a WPL season, while Heidelberg is fifth, with six points.

The final match of the round pitted Ashburton against Keilor Park at Ashburton Park, with Keilor looking for its first points of the season, and Ashburton aiming to build on its opening day victory. It was the home side that claimed the spoils, scoring three unanswered goals to record its second victory in as many games. A 2-0 half time lead set the stage for the victory, and Ashburton added one more after the interval. Continuing the trend of players scoring doubles in Round 3, Meghan Archer was on target twice, with Seyma Erenli scoring the other. Ashburton climbs to fourth on the ladder, and is the third team that has won all its matches without conceding a goal. It has, however, played one game fewer than the teams above it. Keilor has the dubious honour of propping up the competition, with no points and just one goal to its credit as yet this season.

Time is flying in the WPL, and next week we are already on to Round 4, and the matches are evenly divided between Saturday and Sunday. The action begins at Beischer Oval on Saturday as Sandringham looks to continue its winning streak as it makes the long journey to take on Bendigo Vipers. Two sides currently without a points also meet on Saturday, when Eltham North faces Casey Comets at Anderson Park, while at Gardiners Creek Reserve, Eastern Lions will look to end Preston Lions 100% record. On Sunday, bottom plays top at Keilor Park Reserve, as Keilor Park look to get something out of a tough encounter with Box Hill Inter. South Melbourne and Ashburton clash at Bob Jane Stadium, with Heidelberg United and GSL rounding out the weekend at Olympic Village.

WPL ROUND THREE RESULTS

Box Hill Inter 2 (G Koutrouvelis J Humble) Eltham North 0, Sandringham 3 (J Murdoch A Kapusta S White) South Melbourne 0, GSL 4 (M Emond 2 E Heeger 2) Eastern Lions 0, Preston Lions 1 (P Lipec) Bendigo Vipers 0, Casey Comets 2 (L Restrepo 2) Heidelberg Utd 4 (L Balta 2 C Baxendale 2),

WPL STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Box Hill Inter	3	3	0	0	8	0	9
Sandringham	3	3	0	0	6	0	9
Preston Lions	3	3	0	0	5	1	9
Heidelberg Utd	3	2	0	1	8	6	6
South Melbourne	3	1	0	2	6	5	3
Ashburton	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
GSL	2	1	0	1	5	6	3
Bendigo Vipers	2	0	1	1	1	2	1
Eastern Lions	3	0	1	2	1	9	1
Eltham North	2	0	0	2	0	3	0
Keilor Park	2	0	0	2	1	5	0
Casey Comets	3	0	0	3	2	7	0

WPL ROUND FOUR FIXTURES

Bendigo Vipers v Sandringham
Oval Sat 12 Apr KO 2:45PM

Eastern Lions v Preston Lions
Gardiners Creek Res Sat 12 Apr KO3PM

Keilor Park v Box Hill Inter
Keilor Park Res Sun 13 Apr KO 1PM

South Melbourne v Ashburton
Bob Jane Stadium Sun 13 Apr KO 1PM

Heidelberg Utd v GSL
Olympic Village Sun 13 Apr KO 1PM

Eltham North v Casey Comets
Eltham North Res Sun 13 Apr KO 3PM

WPL action between Preston Lions and Bendigo Vipers

By Niki Cook

Photo by John Punshon

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STATE LEAGUE KICKS OFF SEASON '08

Kingston leads strongest field seen in years

The State and Provisional Leagues of Victoria kicked off this weekend with a full round of fixtures taking place across the state as Season 2008 officially got under way.

A total of 22 rounds will be played from now until October with two teams promoted and relegated at season's end.

The State League Division One field appears to be one of the strongest seen in years with any number of teams potentially capable of gaining the prize of Foxtel Cup status come 2009.

Four teams relegated from the last season's Foxtel Cup, Kingston City, Sunshine Georgies, Springvale White Eagles and Bullen Royals (formerly Essendon Royals) would all reasonable stand as worthy pre-season frontrunners to make a quick return to the VPL. Throw into the mixer potential heavyweights St Albans Saints and Dandenong Thunder, the forever promising Langwarrin, ambitious newcomers Southern Stars, Keilor Park, and FC Clifton Hill, not to forget a talented Westagte outfit, and State League Division One promises to be an interesting and entertaining melting pot of Victorian football in '08.

To open the campaign Kingston City wasted no time firing a huge warning signal to the other contenders in the competition when it outclassed and demolished Westgate by a convincing 4-1 scoreline putting the south eastern side in pole position in the standings after Round One - all be it on goal difference.

Bentleigh Green also opened the new year with maximum points handing a 3-1 baptism of fire to Division One debutants FC Clifton Hill.

In one of the matches of the round Southern Stars also made its debut in the league in a hard fought 1-1 draw away to Gus McLeod's Langwarrin. Before a big crowd of nearly 1,000 spectators Stars certainly showed their stripes when it came from a goal down and with ten men to grab an impressive point as the spoils were shared.

Southern Stars coach, Dean Hennessey said after the match, "When you look at the schedule for the year you always think of the certain games that are going to be difficult away from home and the Langwarrin game certainly comes to mind. I've played against Gus' teams before and it's a very difficult place to go and visit. If you asked before the game if I could have taken a point I would have and in my opinion a draw was most probably a fair result. "

"Considering we played with ten men for thirty-five minutes, which was a very harsh decision as well considering it was a second yellow card, and then the fact they were given a disputable free-kick from which they scored from to add further salt in to the wound, I think if you look at that and the way we came back, we really took the game to Langwarrin, and I don't think we would have not been unlucky not to have taken all three points. Overall, to be fair, and I'm sure Gus will agree, on the balance of play a point each was most probably fair.'

In other results Andy O'Dell's Sunshine Georgies left it late to score twice in the last ten minutes to beat Dandenong Thunder 2-0 away from home at the always daunting George Andrews Reserve.

Springvale White Eagles managed to exorcise some of the demons from its disastrous season last year by winning 2-0 against Keilor Park.

The final match to complete the round will take place tonight between Bullen Royals and St Albans saints at the Veneto Club, Bullen with a 8.15pm KO

By James Taylor

Photos by John Punshon

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE SQUAD LISTS 2008

BENTLEIGH GREENS
Ngarai Damaiana Bahar, Boris Bajic, Dean Constantinou, Raphaele De Vito, Sam De Vito, Sam De Vito, Adrian Gallo, George Giannou, Didier Imbert, Andrew Jose Jerez, James Karanicolas, Lewis Karanicolas, Nicholas Katsamboukas, Kristopher Kousis, Jim Kourtis, Kristian Kutura, Ivo Gregorino Madeira, Peter McVeigh, Anthony Miltsos, Christian Morales, Ljubisa Nikolic, Nenad Pavasovic, Marcelo Pena, Dean Piemonte, Mitchell Pino, Adam Ricciuti, Jason Ricciuti, Alex Rojas, Nicholas Stamatiou, George Stavridis, Michael Theocharous, Paul Theocharous, Rados Tomic, Nick Tsaltas, Steven Tzakopoulos, Ilias Tzintzis, Hayato Yamada.

BULLEEN ROYALS FC
Daniel Aquilina, Saso Becvinovski, Mifit Bojku, Julian Buzzanca Leonardo (Len) Catalano, Ricky Catalano, Luke York Childs, John Cvetkovski, Hayden Connor D'Agostino, Matthew James Dimech, Daniel Eskander, Michael Angelo Eskander, Christopher Fredes, Damien Paul Guglielmi, Matthew Allan Leckie, Benjamin Thomas Light, Danny (Dejan) Madaroski, Michael Mazzini , Cameron John Miles, Sam Roem, Doug William Scott, Andrew Skoulios, Dean Tartaglia, Pratik Thapa, Kieran Garth Tracey, Frank Tramontana, Elias Tsintzas, Haris Vrbovac.

DANDENONG THUNDER FC
Murat Irfan Abazi, Murat Irfan Abazi, Mohammed Abdulla Alsakran, Mansoor Aslami, Stephen Camilleri, Grant Colville, Fajrim Dalipovski, Joseph Di Iorio, Yehya Dit El Hali Dimassi, Tom Ho, Filim Ibraimi, Ibraim Ibraimi, Selim Ibraimi, Ivan Klarica, Vetton Korcanovski, Taulant Mane, Mentor Memeti, Ervin Naytellari, Alfonso Opazo, Levent Osman, Arsen Ravonisku, Klajdi Ravoniku, Mark Riley, Rexhep Selimani, Marcus Stergiopoulos, Malik Sulemani, Xhezair Sulemani, Goulie Tang, Adem Tezeli, Farouk Tijani, Dennis Ukalovski, Azim Xhaferi, Arnel Zahirovic, Semir Zekirija, Ymet Zijai.

FC CLIFTON HILL
Daniel Ali Barakat, Miguel Barrigos, Alexander Charles Calltrop, Remzi Dermele, Fotis (Frank) Drakopoulos, Morris Edwards, Chris Fakos, Patrick James Grigg, Luke, Christopher Grounds, Sammy Habib, Ozan Kara, George Karkaletsis, Peter Katris, Isaac Konstantinidis, Chris Lekanis, Michael Mazzarella, Salah Musa, Nick Nicolaidis, Serkan Oksuz, Theo Papoutsis, Jack Michael Pollock, Chris Pope, Zoran Romanovski, Milan Sajkic, Jafer Mohamed Salah, Daniel Saleh, Abraham Staikuras, Antonios Toutzaris, Nick Tsintiaras, Sam George Tyrikos, Chris Vithoulkas, Dimitri Vithoulkas, Ari Vlahos, Andrew Douglas Watkins.

KEILOR PARK FC
Albert Amato, Sam Martin Arico, Dale Paul Barbuto, Nikola Baresic, Steven Bojkovski, Lorenzo Carbone, Ahmed Chawk, Steven Cudrig, Jarryd Cutajar, Atef El Dib, Steven, Mark Esposito, Derek Galea, Paul Galea, Antony Genovese, Michael Andrew Karlis, Brian Maher, Michael Mazzarino, Denys Menjivar, Mohammed, Daniel Joseph Moore, Christopher Mosianos, Grant Mussel, Steven Mussel, Mathew Nikolic, Marcos Oliveira, Darren Pace, Nicholas Pagounis, Jason Quilici, Fabian Sirgiovanni, Harry Stamatiadis, Peter Tawil, Matthew Worrall, Vincent Zafferano.

KINGSTON CITY FC
Alexandros Akrivopoulos, Michael Altidis, Balint Gabor Arndt, James Ashby, Dylan, Jackson Burke, Marcus Carlei, Adrian Chila, Joshua Colosimo, Vasilios Daglis, Boris Escobar, Joseph Ferencz, Danny Hartley, James Kakouros, George Karagiannis, Kosta Karazisis, Andrew Michael KLOPOULOS, Christos Konstas, Michael Lambadaridis
Jimmy Latinopoulos, Steward Lorrun, George Loukas, Christopher TomiMarra, Paul Mavros, Anastasi, Mimikos, Dimitrios (James) Nezos, Dushan Nikolic, Andy Pantsoglou, Alexi Papadakis, Nikolaos Papadopoulos, John Pappas, John Petrou, Anthony Rosamilia, Peter Stathopoulos, Anthony Stavridis, Alessandro Stazio, Andrew Strapellas, Nick Tolios, Mladen Tosic, Michael P. Tyrikos, Samuel Van De Kerkhof, Bill Vasilopoulos, Nick Zevgaras.

LANGWARRIN FC
Adam Wais Ahmadzai, Thomas Ahmadzai, Daniel Biondo, Mitchell Blake, David Breslin, Luke Burgess, Benjamin Shaun Caffrey, Karl Cochrane, Stuart John Craig, Benjamin Cullen, James Cullen, Anthony David Famularo, Peter Ferguson, Liam George, Jamie George Heard, Matthew James Hodgson, Joe Iline, Christopher Paul Jones, Alex Mackie, Kevin Mcalister, Darren Scott McClenaghan, Caleb Johannes Nicholes, Simon Anthony O'Donnell, Jamie-Lee O'Donoghue, Adam Poole
Christopher Kevin Quinn, Lirim Rasimi, Hayden Schippers, Sean Andrew Skelly, Brenton Douglas Smith, Sean Smith, Shane Tagliaferro, Nicholas Thomas, Barry Tulloch.

SOUTHERN STARS FC
Alp Akdogan, Fatih Akdogan, Gokturk Tahsin Altiparmak, Batuhan Bakici, Aziz El Bayeh, Thierry Boi, Vincent Joseph Bontempis, Murat Caliskan, Mawia Cherif, Derrick Douglas Chisholm, Dogan Dagli, Joseph Anthony Damiano, Serkan Dogan, Sercan Tekin Doganay, Christopher Driver, Anthony Gaetano, Cihan Kara, Yunus Kaymaz, Kareem Muhamad, Vu Nguyen, Fergal Martin O'Colman, Gurkan Ozakman, Colin Francis Quirk, Trent Adam Rickard, Andrew Cameron Ross, Adam Mark Rudzki, Berkan Sakaci, Rasim Segi, Michael Christain Sivulja, Koray Suat, Adem Tavsancioglu, Husamettin Ulusan, Sait Uygur, Mustafa Yenilmez

SPRINGVALE WHITE EAGLES FC
William Armour, Frud Bezhan, Sasa Bogdanovic, Kamil Brozstek, Youssef Elkassaby, Mathew George, Petar Jevremovic, Dejan Karac, Miroslav Karac, Andrew Carol Kollar, Paul Maghiar, Grujo Mrdic, Masumi Nishida, Chalio Nsenduka, Denis Oluic, Darko Perazic, Gojko Porijevic, Nenad Prastalo, Predrag Radinovic, Ahmad Samim Rahim, Dejan Rikanovic, Nemanja Salamandic, Hugo Sena, Borislav Skaro, Kruno Stanisic, Igor Stojanac, Ivanveuz Styczen, Michael Lam Tut, Michael Voinea, Daniel Webb, Simon Peter Webster, Stanislav Zjajic, Petar Zoric, Slobodan Zoric.

ST ALBANS SAINTS FC
George Abatzidis, Metej Azinovic, Pero Barac, Ante Bilic, Antonio Brekalo, Mario Brekalo, Peter Brekalo, Liam Stuart Cannell, Brian Thomas Chesson, Jane Cozeski, Ivan Filipovic, CHRISTOPHER GEORGE GEORGIOU, David Grbac, Ryan Grech, Chris Hili, Steven Jovanovski, Goran Jozeljic, Nicholas Kladaric, Nikola Korijevic, Mario Krajina, Josip Loncaric, Anthony Maric, Shannon Micallef, Tom Mikic, Ivan Mioc, Guillermo Olea, Alan Paleka, Tomislav Pogacic, Ilija Rados, Jure Radosevic, Martin Raspudic, Damir Salcin, Marko Sestan, Dragan Viskovic, NICHOLAS DANIEL VUNDERL.

SUNSHINE GEORGIES FC
Andrew Lee Agius, Colin Azzopardi, James Baskerville, Anthony Bowsley, David Calleja, Israel Carter, Matthew Cini, Simon Louis Crowden, Dusko Delic, Michael Esposito, Adrian Gebrehiwot, Jake Grech, Sean Grech, Cesar Hermosilla, Nathan James Hume, Martin John, Thomas Elliot Johnstone, Paul Kartis, Kile Gerald Kennedy, Peter Kousoupias, Steven Manceski, George Papadopoulos, Stefan Luke Parnis, Sacha Pisani, Dion Portelli, Juan Jose Portillo, Jacob Quickenden, Huon William Russell, Sergio Tapia, Vasko Trpcevski, Ilia Leigh Tsoumerkas, Steven Underwood, Wayne Martin Wallace, Paul Anthony Wilson, Toshome Yabio, Julian Andrew Zach

WESTGATE FC
Felipe Alvear, Tony Andreevski, Marko Arbutovic, Zdravko Atanasovski, George Barkho, Joseph Raymond De Bono, Jason Dimitrievski, Daniel Glogovac, Nikola Grba
Vincenzo Ierardo, Aleksandar Ilic, Vladimir Jaksic, Dragoslav Ljubinkovic, Miroslav, Roger Lunt, Milan Milutinovic, Ilce Mladenovski, Carlos Andres Munoz, Paul Muscat, Robert Nikolic, Zoran Ninkovic, Carlos Opazo, Boban Pajic, Zoran Pajic, Lazar Petrovic, Marco Pezzino, Marijo Roza, Milan Savic, Denis Tepavac, Bobby Todorovski, Filip Tortevski, Robert Trajanovski, Mebrahtom Alemaw Yabio, Yehonnes Yekuno, Aleksandar Zivkovic.

State League Division One action: FC Clifton Hill's Luke Grounds wins this tussle with Bentleigh Greens' George Giannou.

THIS WEEK'S FIXTURES

Kingston City v FC Clifton Hill
Grange Reserve Fri 11 Apr KO 8:30PM

Southern Stars v Westgate
Ross Reserve Sat 12 Apr KO 3:00PM

Sunshine Georgies v Bulleen Royals
Chaplin Reserve Sat 12 Apr KO 3:00PM

St Albans Saints v Keilor Park
Churchill Reserve Sun 13 Apr KO 3:00PM

Bentleigh Greens v Dandenong Thunder
Kingston Heath Sun 13 Apr KO 3:00PM

Sp'vale White Eagles v Langwarrin
Serbian Sports Centre Sun 13 Apr KO 6:15PM

DIVISION ONE RESULTS

FC Clifton Hill 1 (C Pope) **Bentleigh Greens 3** (A Rojas 2 N Tsaltas)**, Keilor Park 0 Springvale White Eagles 2** (G Mrdic K Stanisic)**, Langwarrin 1 Southern Stars 1, Dandenong Thunder 0 Sunshine Georgies 2** (A Bowsley PA Wilson)**, Westgate 1** (B Pajic) **Kingston City 4** (J Latinopoulos 2 BG Arndt A Strapelias).

RESERVE DETAILS

FC Clifton Hill 0 Bentleigh Greens 6, Keilor Park 2 Springvale White Eagles 1, Langwarrin 1 Southern Stars 1, Dandenong Thunder 2 Sunshine Georgies 2, Westgate 2 Kingston City 0.

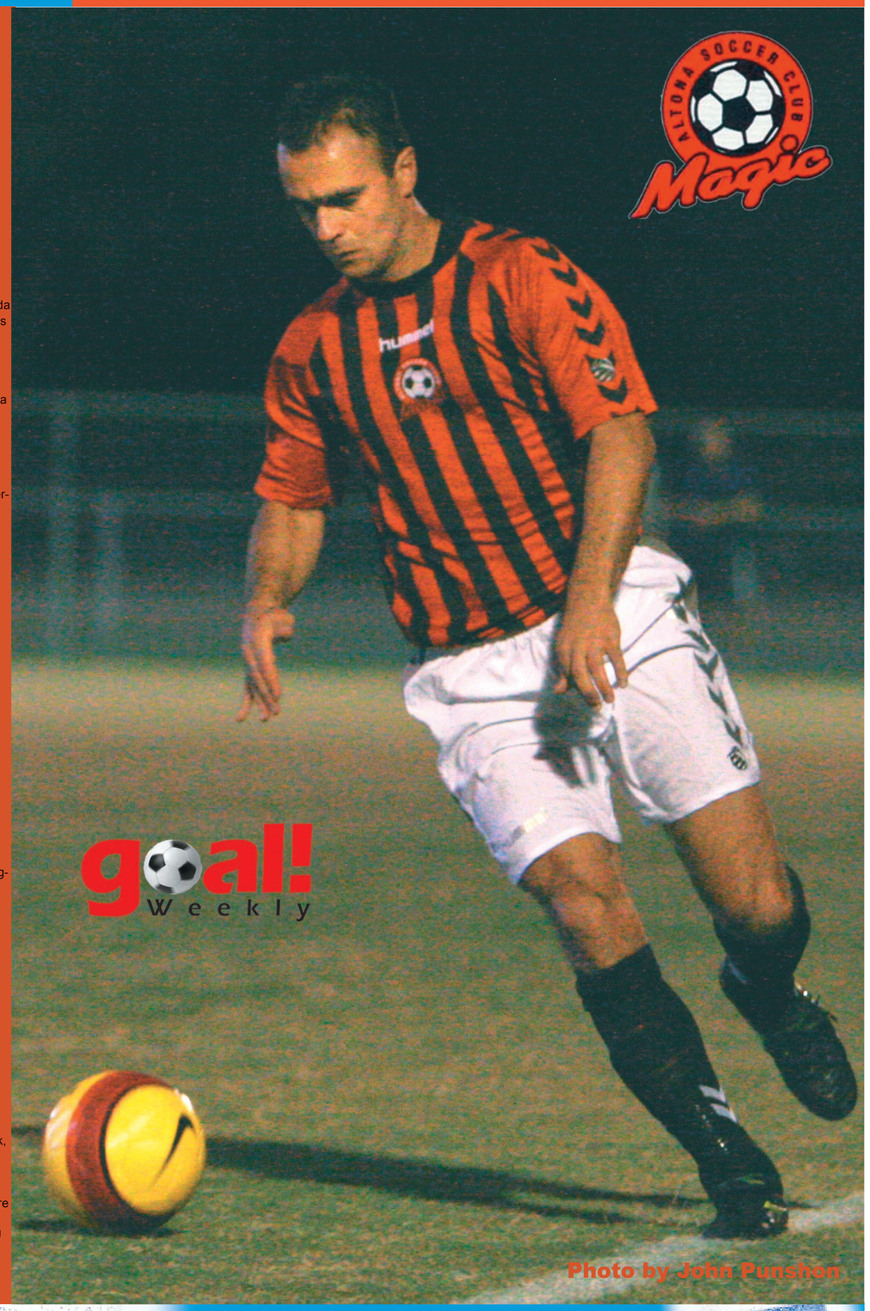
DIVISION ONE STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PT
Kingston City	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**4**	**1**	**3**
Bentleigh Greens	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**3**	**1**	**3**
Springvale White Eagles	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Sunshine Georgies	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Southern Stars	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Langwarrin	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
FC Clifton Hill	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
Keilor Park	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Dandenong Thunder	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Westgate	1	0	0	1	1	4	0
Bulleen Royals	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
St Albans Saints	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

AGIM SHERIFOVSKI

ALTONA MAGIC FC

FULL NAME: Agim Sherifovski
BIRTHPLACE: Wollongong N.S.W
BIRTH DATE: 24/05/1974
HEIGHT: 179cms
WEIGHT: 76kgs
MARRIED: Yes
CAR: Old Magna
OCCUPATION OUTSIDE OF FOOTBALL: Personal Banking Manager
NICKNAME: Sherif
PREVIOUS CLUBS: Illawarra, Wollongong, George Cross, South Melbourne, Heidelberg, Bulleen, Fawkner.
REPRESENTATIVE HONOURS: N.S.W, Victoria – Youth & Seniors
CHILDHOOD FOOTBALL HERO: Ruud Gullit
FAVOURITE O/S PLAYER: Cesc Fabregas from Arsenal (at the moment).
FAVOURITE V-LEAGUE PLAYER: Henry Fa'Aroda
FAVOURITE FORMER SOCCEROO: Jim Patikas
FAVOURITE CURRENT SOCCEROO: Jason Culina
MOST MEMORABLE MATCH AS A PLAYER: First National Legaue game against Morwell
MOST MEMORABLE MATCH AS A FAN: Australia Qualifying for World Cup
MOST MEMORABLE GOAL YOU'VE SCORED: There's a couple there from my junior days.
FUNNIEST MOMENT IN FOOTBALL: Taking a corner and kicking the corner flag & not the ball.
BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT: Not taking up overseas/trials offered, instead finishing Uni studies.
WORST INJURY: None really, small medial tear about 3 years ago.
MOST DIFFICULT OPPONENT: Kevin Muscat (in his younger days)
FAVOURITE AWAY GROUND: Epping Stadium
SUPERSTITIONS: None really, use to have heaps on match day.
TYPICAL MATCH DAY MEAL: Anything light and healthy & water.
WHAT ARE YOUR STRENGTHS: Speed, Fitness, Will to win and never give up.
WHAT ARE YOUR WEAKNESSES: Rush things every now and then.
FAVOURITE TEAM WHEN GROWING UP: Barcelona FC
FAVOURITE OTHER SPORTS:. I'll play and watch anything & everything
FAVOURITE OTHER SPORTSPERSON: Michael Jordan
FAVOURITE FOODS: Pasta, Chicken, Steaks , anything not too bad for you.
FAVOURITE ACTOR/ACTRESS: Denzel Washington & Catherine Zeta Jones (at the moment).
HOBBIES: Spending time with my family doing stuff around the house outside.
FAVOURITE HOLIDAY RESORT: North Beach – Wollongong.
FAVOURITE NIGHTSPOT: My Bed these days.
IDEAL DATE: Someone funny & good looking… yeah I'd say my wife.
FAVOURITE TV SHOWS: At the Moment – Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares
FAVOURITE MUSIC: Anything – fairly diverse
FAVOURITE FILM: Rudy
LAST SOCCER SHIRT YOU BOUGHT: Brasil top for my son Imran.
FUNNIEST RUMOUR YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT YOURSELF: That I am a right sided player.
BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON CAREER: Frank Arok, Gary Cole, Franz Weimper, my brother Serif.
BIGGEST DRAG IN SOCCER: Players that just come to kill time, especially youngsters.
FOOTBALL AMBITION: To Win League once more & retire in one piece.
WHICH PERSON IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO MEET? : Pele
YOUR TIP FOR THIS YEAR'S V-LEAGUE: The Magic of course.



HEIDELBERG UNITED

2 - 3

FAWKNER BLUES

FAWKNER FINALLY FINDS ITS FEET

Bergers underdone at home

In a battle which Fawkner needed a win to open its account for the year, we saw an entertaining game with lots of goals and a number of missed opportunities for both teams

The better and more determined blues deserved there win however the match could have gone either way.

Early in the game Fawkner started well with Younan looking busy early and dangerous up forward but In the 12th minute of the game we saw Heidelberg take the lead with some slack defending by the blues which saw Eric Vassiliadis capitalize and score the opener for the home side. In the 23rd minute Heidelberg had an opportunity to double the advantage as Hockless had a strike which he could of converted.

Vassiliadis could of doubled his tally with a strike that went just wide and clearly Heidelberg were the superior team particularly in the middle of the park. However as the half went on Blues players such as Galanos and Husanovic started to look dangerous running from midfield putting the Heidelberg under the pressure.

In the 40th minute Heidelberg hit Fawkner on a counter attack which left Napoli one on one at the back which he made a crucial tackle which saved a certain goal for Fawkner. In the 45th minute Fawkner got reward for there efforts when Galonas, Youssef and then finally Younan linked up to create a marvelous chance and great finish by Younan who chipped the keeper from just inside the box.

In the second half we saw a fairly even contest early on with both sides looking to get max points out of the game. In the 51st minute Galanos made a surging run through the Heidelberg defence which then lead to a one on one opportunity which was brilliantly saved by Gavalas. Fawkner then looked like they took control of a game they were determined to get a result. In the 62nd minute Drossos forced Schwalger into a terrific save from all of 30 yards.

Only minutes later some slack defending by Heidelberg left Husanovic to make an intelligent run in the box which then he slotted past Gavalas to put Fawkner into a deserved lead. In the 77th Fawkner took a 3-1 lead when Galanos won his side a penalty after being clearly pushed in the box, this left Husanovic with the pressure of converting the spot kick and he made no mistake however Gavalas may of felt he could of saved it after getting a hand to it.

Heidelberg then slowly pilled up the pressure and finally broke the Fawkner defence when Jones tapped in a goal line scramble to put Fawkner under the pump in the remaining moments. Heidelberg then had a chance to level the game when they broke through some slack Blues defending which turned into a one on one opportunity which then Schwalger made a match winning save for his team.

Fawkner would be over the moon to finally get their first points of the season and will look to build on this with a clash with Coburg Utd next week at CB Smith reserve where as Heidelberg will be disappointed that they let 3 points slip at home and will look to bounce back with a win against Altona Magic.

Match Details:

HEIDELBERG UTD:
Team: Peter Gavalas, Robert Liparotti, Peter Roberts(Aimal Jamall 53min), Daniel Jones, Eric Vassiliadis(Timothy Paton 80min), Josip Kosic, Denis Alilovic, Robert Dolevski(Jim Deossos 46min), James Stefanou, Graham Hockless, Saso Alekovski

Bench: Marko Sutalo, Timothy Paton, Jim Drossos, Aimal Jamall

Scorers: Vassiliadis 12', Jones 88'.

Yellow cards: None
.Red cards: None

FAWKNER BLUES:
Team Pasi Schwalger, Clifford Tuck, Boris Masic, Ben Gogger, Ralph Napoli, Fikret Husanovic(Dejan Radojicic 82min), Adam Zilic, Jason Principato, Zia Younan(Michael Packovski 82min), Joseph Youssef, Yannis Galanos(Roberto Bazzano 86min)

Bench: Ross Mancuso, Michael Packovski, Dejan Radojicic, Roberto Bazzano

Scores: Younan 45', Husanovic 66', 77'.

Yellow cards: Joseph Youssef, Fikret Husanovic
Red cards: None

Man of the Match
Yannis Galanos
(Fawkner Blues)

Crowd: 500
Venue: Olympic Village

Heidelberg's David Jones puts his body on the line as he attempts to block Fawkners's Yannis Galanos' kick.

By Harry Papadopoulos
Photos by John Punshon

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SOUTH MELBOURNE

0 - 3

GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS

CAVALIERS MARCH GATHERS STEAM

Two goal Nikolic gives South the blues

A professional and dominant display by Green Gully has seen the Cavaliers annihilate South Melbourne by three goals to nil at a sun-drenched Bob Jane Stadium on Sunday.

With both sides coming off impressive wins the previous week, an expectant crowd arrived at Bob Jane Stadium expecting to see a cracking contest, however not even the staunchest Green Gully fan could expect such a lopsided contest.

South started the game brightly, when a quality run down the right hand flank by Goran Zoric saw the speedy midfielder dart past a few defenders, before hitting his shot into the arms of Steven Tilovski in the Gully goal.

Fernando tried to replicate Zoric only three minutes later, with the Brazilian also hitting a long range drive into the prying arms of the very secure Tilovski.

Gully's first real opportunity of the contest came in the 20th minute, when an opportunistic ball was swung into the back post. With confusion inside the area and a poor attempt to capture the ball by Dean Anastasiadis, the ball found Joel Nikolic open at the back post and he knocked the ball in to give Gully a 0-1 lead.

Gully doubled their advantage in the 26th minute when the referee awarded them a penalty after Steven O'Dor was adjudged to have handballed the ball just inside the area. With no hesitation, veteran Stephen Burton stepped up and slammed the ball into the back of net, sending Anastasiadis the wrong way for 0-2.

With the South side in complete disarray, Nikolic should have scored his second after spooning a long drive well over the bar from just outside the area.

South had a big opportunity to get back into the contest in the 33rd minute, when a lovely ball passed over the stagnant defence and found the feet of Fernando. With only Tilovski in front of him, Fernando hit a poor shot into the feet of the lunging keeper, who once again thwarted the South attack.

Tilovski once again stood in the way of South just before the interval, after a brilliant ball into the area by Fernando was poorly defended by Dean Fak and his Gully defence. The ball then fell to O'Dor inside the six yard box, who hit the ball directly into the legs of Tilovski.

The second half was all Green Gully, with the away side controlling the tempo and being first to the ball at every opportunity.

In the 58th minute a lunging tackle by Poutakidis, who appeared to have got the ball, was awarded as a penalty, with referee Jim Zafiriou claiming Poutakidis caught the man. Stepping up to take the penalty was Andy Vargas, with the experienced midfielder keen to score another goal against South Melbourne. With the keeper once again beaten, South dodged a bullet as the ball struck the upright and stayed out.

South's main opportunity in the 2nd half came in the 63rd minute. Some lovely work by Zoric on the left flank saw the midfielder launch an inch-perfect pass to the back post, where Hamlet Armenian was waiting. Armenian looked to have steered a powerful header into the top corner, only for Tilovski to fly past the goal face and once again capture the ball somewhat athletically in mid-air.

Gully closed the game off in the 72nd minute when some poor defending allowed for Joel Nikolic to capture possession just outside the area. With no defender in sight, Nikolic slammed the ball underneath the oncoming Anastasiadis for his second of the night.

With the game well and truly over, South dodged yet another bullet when a poor effort late in the game by Shaun Romein from just inside the area saw the ball fly past the outside of the post.

South Melbourne will now somehow have to regroup and travel to the in-form Melbourne Knights next week. With results currently going against the club, the club languishes in 10th position and is out of the relegation area only on goal difference.

Green Gully will also be facing a tough game, facing the league-leading Oakleigh Cannons and will be attempting to further propel themselves up the table.

Starting Lineups:

South:
1 Anastasiadis, Dean (c) (gk) 2 Nunes, Shane 4 O'Dor, Steven 9 Caldwell, Nathan 11 Diaco, Ricky 12 Zoric, Goran 13 La Verde, Antonio 14 Tavsancioglu, Ramazan 15 De Moraes, Fernando 22 Poutakidis, Sam S 20 De Nittis, Gianni

Gully:
23 Tilovski, Steven (gk) 2 Ivesic, Kristijan 3 Burton, Steven P 4 Fak, Dean (c) 7 Fleming, Jeffrey 9 Banks, Campbell 14 Ollerton, Ryan 15 Nastevski, Dragi 16 Medjedovic, Mile 17 Vargas, Andy 18 Nikolic, Joel

Crowd: 1500
Venue: Bob Jane Stadium

South Melbourne's Sam Poutakidis rips the ball out from under Gully's Kristian Ivesic's feet at Bob Jane Stadium yesterday. Gully had the last laugh though and won 3-0.

By George Kouroumalis
Photos by Therese Duffy

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ROUND ONE

Seniors — NORTH WEST 2 — Reserves

Thomastown Devils 0 Ballarat Red Devils 4 (J Romein AB Lymn 2 F Labakohler), Pascoe Vale 1 (DA Genovesi) Maribyrnong Greens 0, Altona East Phoenix 5 (M Tolli G Iedom B Lojanica 3) Altona City 0, North Geelong Warriors 3 (A Cervinski N Hopper P Babic) Moreland City 1 (R Dinse), Brunswick City 1 (A Franklin) Cairnlea 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Altona East Phoenix	1	1	0	0	5	0	5	3
2 Ballarat Red Devils	1	1	0	0	4	0	4	3
3 North Geelong Warriors	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
4 Pascoe Vale	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
5 Brunswick City	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
6 Williamstown	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
7 Maribyrnong Greens	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
8 Werribee City	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
9 Cairnlea	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
10 Moreland City	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
11 Thomastown Devils	1	0	0	1	0	4	-4	0
12 Altona City	1	0	0	1	0	5	-5	0

Thomastown Devils 3 Ballarat Red Devils 2, Pascoe Vale 1 Maribyrnong Greens 0, Altona East Phoenix 0 Altona City 3, North Geelong Warriors 1 Moreland City 2, Brunswick City 0 Cairnlea 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Altona City	1	1	0	0	3	0	3	3
2 Thomastown Devils	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
3 Williamstown	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
4 Moreland City	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
5 Cairnlea	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
6 Pascoe Vale	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
7 Werribee City	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
8 Ballarat Red Devils	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
9 North Geelong	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
10 Brunswick City	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
11 Maribyrnong Grns	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
12 Altona East Ph	1	0	0	1	0	3	-3	0

Seniors — SOUTH EAST 2 — Reserves

Doncaster Rovers 5 (D Iacovitti M Dal Ben 2 AJ Hammer F Korkaric) Stonnington City 1 (JM Sastre-Tejedor), Northcote City 3 (J Triantopoulos D Moshis D Archimandritis) Casey Comets 1 (PM Presti), Chelsea 5 (Z Tudor 2 T Grskovic WM Gordon J Briscoe) Diamond Valley Utd 1 (G Kotsiris), Eastern Lions 3 (S Groom B Ziada MJ O'Hare) South Springvale 0, Knox City 4 (P Veljovic J Hingert AJ Saunders J Valadon) Port Melbourne 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Chelsea	1	1	0	0	5	1	4	3
2 Doncaster Rovers	1	1	0	0	5	1	4	3
3 Knox City	1	1	0	0	4	0	4	3
4 Eastern Lions	1	1	0	0	3	0	3	3
5 Northcote City	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
6 Waverley Wanderer	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
7 Peninsula Strikers	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
8 Casey Comets	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
9 South Springvale	1	0	0	1	0	3	-3	0
10 Stonnington City	1	0	0	1	1	5	-4	0
11 Diamond Valley	1	0	0	1	1	5	-4	0
12 Port Melbourne	1	0	0	1	0	4	-4	0

Doncaster Rovers 6 Stonnington City 0, Northcote City 3 Casey Comets 2, Chelsea 3 Diamond Valley Utd 2, Eastern Lions 2 South Springvale 1, Knox City 5 Port Melbourne 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Doncaster Rovers	1	1	0	0	6	0	6	3
2 Knox City	1	1	0	0	5	0	5	3
3 Northcote City	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
4 Chelsea	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
5 Peninsula Strikers	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
6 Eastern Lions	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
7 Diamond Valley	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
8 Casey Comets	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
9 South Springvale	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
10 Waverley Wandere	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
11 Port Melbourne	1	0	0	1	0	5	-5	0
12 Stonnington City	1	0	0	1	0	6	-6	0

Seniors — NORTH WEST 3 — Reserves

Geelong Rangers 3 (J Blackburn T Hardy 2) Yarraville Glory 1 (M Nastic), North Sunshine Eagles 1 (D Huseyin) Sydenham Park 1 (J Markovski), La Trobe University 3 (P Devuono V Skopljak H Saglam) Laverton Park 2 (V De La Plaza J Barra), Banyule City 0 Lalor Utd 0, Geelong 2 (J Ikanovic 2) Sunbury Utd 0, Lalor 2 (D Alevizos D Petkovski) Westvale 1 (DJ Sfetcopoulos).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Geelong Rangers	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
2 Geelong	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
3 La Trobe University	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
4 Nth Sunshine Eagles	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
5 Sydenham Park	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
6 Banyule City	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
7 Lalor Utd	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
8 Lalor	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	0
9 Laverton Park	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
10 Westvale	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
11 Yarraville Glory	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
12 Sunbury Utd	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0

Geelong Rangers 2 Yarraville Glory 3, North Sunshine Eagles 3 Sydenham Park 3, La Trobe University 5 Laverton Park 2, Banyule City 3 Lalor Utd 2, Geelong 2 Sunbury Utd 0, Lalor 2 Westvale 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 La Trobe University	1	1	0	0	5	2	3	3
2 Geelong	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
3 Yarraville Glory	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
4 Banyule City	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
5 North Sunshine Eagles	1	0	1	0	3	3	0	1
6 Sydenham Park	1	0	1	0	3	3	0	1
7 Westvale	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
8 Lalor Utd	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
9 Geelong Rangers	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
10 Sunbury Utd	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
11 Laverton Park	1	0	0	1	2	5	-3	0
12 Lalor	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	-2

Seniors — SOUTH EAST 3 — Reserves

Southern Suburbs 1 (G Giannakopoulos) Berwick City 1 (J Rand), Doveton 2 (HA Reyes M Tidd) Heatherton Utd 2 (E Ahmetovic MD Roberts), Endeavour Utd 2 (D Ithier P Sequeira) Brandon Park 2 (S Kennedy A Hakim), Boroondara Eagles 0 Sandringham City 3 (PW Purcell MJ PUTSON 2), Springvale City 2 (A Lolic M Pedic) Croydon City Arrows 1 (M Zoppos).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Sandringham City	1	1	0	0	3	0	3	3
2 Springvale City	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
3 Brandon Park	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
4 Doveton	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
5 Endeavour Utd	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
6 Heatherton Utd	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
7 Berwick City	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
8 Southern Suburbs	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
9 Morwell Pegasus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10 North Caulfield	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11 Croydon City Arrows	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
12 Boroondara Eagles	1	0	0	1	0	3	-3	0

Southern Suburbs 3 Berwick City 3, Doveton 2 Heatherton Utd 0, Endeavour Utd 0 Brandon Park 1, Boroondara Eagles 2 Sandringham City 1, Springvale City 1 Croydon City Arrows 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Doveton	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
2 Boroondara Eagles	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
3 Croydon City Arrows	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
4 Brandon Park	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
5 Berwick City	1	0	1	0	3	3	0	1
6 Southern Suburbs	1	0	1	0	3	3	0	1
7 Morwell Pegasus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 North Caulfield	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Sandringham City	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
10 Springvale City	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
11 Endeavour Utd	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
12 Heatherton Utd	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0

Seniors — PROVI 1 NORTH WEST — Reserves

Whittlesea Utd 1 (E Durnaoglu) Plenty Valley Lions 1 (D Stojanovski), Melbourne Tornado 0 Glenroy 2 (D Peric A Babo), Melbourne University Rangers 2 (FR Lamari P Schjerven) Corio 0, South Yarra 0 Elwood City 0, Western Eagles 1 (Own Goal) Avondale Heights 1 (G Di Marco).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Melbourne Uni Rangers	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
2 Plenty Valley Lions	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
3 Avondale Heights	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
4 Western Eagles	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
5 Whittlesea Utd	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
6 South Yarra	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
7 Elwood City	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
8 Glenroy	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	0
9 Hume Utd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10 Melbourne City	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11 Melbourne Tornado	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
12 Corio	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0

Whittlesea Utd 0 Plenty Valley Lions 4, Melbourne Tornado 2 Glenroy 1, Melbourne University Rangers 6 Corio 1, South Yarra 3 Elwood City 0, Western Eagles 1 Avondale Heights 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Melbourne Uni Rangers	1	1	0	0	6	1	5	3
2 Plenty Valley Lions	1	1	0	0	4	0	4	3
3 South Yarra	1	1	0	0	3	0	3	3
4 Avondale Heights	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
5 Melbourne Tornado	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
6 Hume Utd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7 Melbourne City	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Western Eagles	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
9 Elwood City	1	0	0	1	0	3	-3	0
10 Whittlesea Utd	1	0	0	1	0	4	-4	0
11 Corio	1	0	0	1	1	6	-5	0
12 Glenroy	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	-3

Seniors — PROVI 1 SOUTH EAST — Reserves

White Star Dandenong 1 (K Szwed) Mooroolbark 1 (D Shields), Ashburton 0 Scotch Old Boys 2 (D Fielding A Truong), Fitzroy City 2 (S Peutherer C Smillie) Warragul Utd 2 (MK Lewry O Kelly), Nunawading City 2 (J Ivanov CK Stemn Jnr) Old Melburnians 1 (A Carmody), Noble Park Utd 5 (C Durand G Mrdic N Vukosavljevic 3) Monash University 1 (A Salmon),.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Scotch Old Boys	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
2 Nunawading City	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
3 Warragul Utd	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
4 Fitzroy City	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
5 Mooroolbark	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
6 White Star Dandenong	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
7 Noble Park Utd	1	1	0	0	5	1	4	0
8 Monbulk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Rowville Eagles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10 Old Melburnians	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
11 Ashburton	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
12 Monash University	1	0	0	1	1	5	-4	0

White Star Dandenong 0 Mooroolbark 2, Ashburton 2 Scotch Old Boys 1, Fitzroy City 2 Warragul Utd 1, Nunawading City 3 Old Melburnians 2, Noble Park Utd 0 Monash University 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Monash University	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
2 Mooroolbark	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
3 Nunawading City	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
4 Ashburton	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
5 Fitzroy City	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
6 Monbulk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7 Rowville Eagles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Old Melburnians	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
9 Scotch Old Boys	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
10 Warragul Utd	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
11 White Star Dandenong	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
12 Noble Park Utd	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	-3

Seniors — PROVI 2 NORTH WEST — Reserves

Bell Park 1 (E Lawrence) Essendon Utd 3 (P Koukoulis D Loschiavo A Imvriotis), Northern Falcons 0 North City Lions 1 (R Nedelkov), Moreland Utd 1 (E Inglesi) West Preston 2 (S Pouniotis AS Nicolazzo), Darebin Utd 0 Keon Park 1 (C Tsandefskis), Brimbank City 0 Collingwood City 3 (F Papoutsis S Jervis M Serapiglia).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Collingwood City	1	1	0	0	3	0	3	3
2 Essendon Utd	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
3 West Preston	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
4 Keon Park	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
5 North City Lions	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
6 Melton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7 Hoppers Crossing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Moreland Utd	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
9 Northern Falcons	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
10 Darebin Utd	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
11 Bell Park	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
12 Brimbank City	1	0	0	1	0	3	-3	0

Bell Park 0 Essendon Utd 1, Northern Falcons 2 North City Lions 0, Moreland Utd 1 West Preston 4, Darebin Utd 1 Keon Park 4, Brimbank City 2 Collingwood City 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Keon Park	1	1	0	0	4	1	3	3
2 West Preston	1	1	0	0	4	1	3	3
3 Northern Falcons	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
4 Brimbank City	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
5 Essendon Utd	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
6 Hoppers Crossing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7 Melton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Bell Park	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
9 Collingwood City	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
10 North City Lions	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
11 Moreland Utd	1	0	0	1	1	4	-3	0
12 Darebin Utd	1	0	0	1	1	4	-3	0

Seniors — PROVI 2 SOUTH EAST — Reserves

Old Trinity Grammarians Berwick Kings , Old Camberwell Grammar 2 (P Spyropoulos D Hegazi) Riversdale 0, Carrum Utd 0 Lyndale Utd 1 (R Roslan), Mornington 3 (M Bailey DJ Waite C Wright) Caulfield Utd 2 (P Alissaphos O Tufan), Dandenong Sparrows 0 Keysborough 0, Old Brighton Grammarians 0 Whitehorse Utd 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Old Camberwell Gram	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
2 Mornington	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
3 Lyndale Utd	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
4 Whitehorse Utd	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
5 Dandenong Sparrows	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
6 Keysborough	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
7 Old Brighton Gramm	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
8 Old Trinity Grammarians	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Berwick Kings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10 Caulfield Utd	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
11 Carrum Utd	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
12 Riversdale	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0

Old Trinity Grammarians Berwick Kings , Old Camberwell Grammar 2 Riversdale 3, Carrum Utd 3 Lyndale Utd 1, Mornington 2 Caulfield Utd 3, Dandenong Sparrows 3 Keysborough 1, Old Brighton Grammarians 1 Whitehorse Utd 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Carrum Utd	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
2 Dandenong Sparrows	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
3 Caulfield Utd	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
4 Riversdale	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
5 Old Brighton Gramm	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
6 Old Trinity Gramm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7 Berwick Kings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Old Camberwell Gramm	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
9 Mornington	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
10 Whitehorse Utd	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
11 Keysborough	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
12 Lyndale Utd	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0

Seniors — PROVI 3 NORTH WEST — Reserves

Moreland Wolves 2 (D Colella S Wheatley) Surf Coast 1 (J Cayzer), Bundoora Utd 3 (D Chiodo) Brimbank 3, Ascot Vale 1 (A Barakat) Mill Park 3 (G Stylianou 2 P Antoniou), Brunswick Zebras 1 (M Roca) Northern Utd 2 (A Moustafa 2), Dallas Eagles 0 Watsonia Heights 4 (J Adamo 2 R Duerden A Tavolaro), Youth Utd 2 (D Kaya SA Cicek) Epping City 5 (C Spaliaras M Said 4).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Watsonia Heights	1	1	0	0	4	0	4	3
2 Mill Park	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
3 Northern Utd	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
4 Moreland Wolves	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
5 Brimbank	1	0	1	0	3	3	0	1
6 Bundoora Utd	1	0	1	0	3	3	0	1
7 Epping City	0	1	0	0	5	2	3	0
8 Surf Coast	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
9 Brunswick Zebras	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
10 Ascot Vale	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
11 Youth Utd	0	0	0	1	2	5	-3	0
12 Dallas Eagles	1	0	0	1	0	4	-4	-3

Moreland Wolves 3 Surf Coast 1, Bundoora Utd 1 Brimbank 2, Ascot Vale 0 Mill Park 0, Brunswick Zebras 4 Northern Utd 1, Dallas Eagles 1 Watsonia Heights 5, Youth Utd 0 Epping City 7.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Epping City	1	1	0	0	7	0	7	3
2 Watsonia Heights	1	1	0	0	5	1	4	3
3 Brunswick Zebras	1	1	0	0	4	1	3	3
4 Moreland Wolves	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
5 Brimbank	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
6 Ascot Vale	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
7 Mill Park	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
8 Bundoora Utd	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
9 Surf Coast	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
10 Northern Utd	1	0	0	1	1	4	-3	0
11 Youth Utd	1	0	0	1	0	7	-7	0
12 Dallas Eagles	1	0	0	1	1	5	-4	-3

Seniors — PROVI 3 SOUTH EAST — Reserves

Dandenong Warriors 3 (K Hor D Masson JP Antoine) Uni. of Melbourne 1, Endeavour Hills 2 (D Marie 2) Seaford Utd 1 (AD Lancaster), Old Carey 3 (R Stanner C Constantine L Udorovic) Noble Park 1 (A Buhac), Bayside Argonauts 3 (B Whiting BV Mitroulas) Brighton 2 (H Campos R Vickers).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Dandenong Warriors	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
2 Old Carey	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
3 Bayside Argonauts	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	3
4 Endeavour Hills	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
5 Eltham North	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6 Beaumaris	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7 Dandenong City	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Keilor Wolves	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Brighton	1	0	0	1	2	3	-1	0
10 Seaford Utd	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
11 Uni. of Melbourne	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
12 Noble Park	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0

Endeavour Hills 0 Seaford Utd 11, Old Carey 9 Noble Park 1, Bayside Argonauts 2 Brighton 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Seaford Utd	1	1	0	0	11	0	11	3
2 Old Carey	1	1	0	0	9	1	8	3
3 Bayside Argonauts	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
4 Keilor Wolves	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5 Uni. of Melbourne	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6 Beaumaris	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7 Dandenong City	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Dandenong Warriors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Eltham North	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10 Brighton	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
11 Noble Park	1	0	0	1	1	9	-8	0
12 Endeavour Hills	1	0	0	1	0	11	-11	0

ResultsVault football

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ROUND 2 FIXTURES

All matches to be played on Saturday 12th April with 3pm KO unless otherwise stated.

State NW 2
Brunswick City v Moreland City
Dunstan Reserve
Altona City v North Geelong Warriors
HC Kim Reserve
Werribee City v Altona East Phoenix
Galvin Park Reserve
Ballarat Red Devils v Williamstown
Trekardo Park
Cairnlea v Pascoe Vale
Cairnlea Park
Maribyrnong Greens v Thomastown
Devils Skinner Reserve

State SE 2
Port Melbourne v Waverley Wanderers
Anderson Reserve Fri 11 Apr KO 8:30PM
Chelsea v Doncaster Rovers
Anderson Park Fri 11 Apr KO 8:30PM
South Springvale v Knox City
Warner Reserve
Stonnington City v Eastern Lions
Kooyong Reserve No. 3
Peninsula Strikers v Northcote City
Centenary Park
Casey Comets v Diamond Valley Utd
Comets Stadium

State Nw 3
Sunbury Utd v Lalor
Langama Park
Lalor Utd v Geelong
HR Uren Reserve
Laverton Park v Banyule City
Laverton Park Reserve
Sydenham Park v La Trobe University
Keilor Lodge Reserve
Westvale v Geelong Rangers
McKechnie Reserve
Yarraville Glory v North Sunshine Eagles
McIvor Reserve

State SE 3
Sandringham City v Croydon City Arrows
RJ Sillitoe Reserve
Boroondara Eagles v Endeavour Utd
Macleay Park
Heatherton Utd v Morwell Pegasus
Bosnia & Herzegovina Centre
Southern Suburbs v Springvale City
Keeley Park
Berwick City v Doveton
Jack Thomas Reserve
North Caulfield v Brandon Park
Caulfield Park Sun 13 Apr KO 3:00PM

Provi NW 1
Avondale Heights v Melbourne City
Doyle Street Reserve
Elwood City v Western Eagles
Elwood Park
Melbourne University Rangers v South Yarra
Princes Park Oval #2
Glenroy v Corio
Strathnaver Reserve
Hume Utd v Whittlesea Utd
Laura Douglas Reserve
Plenty Valley Lions v Melbourne Tornado
Bundoora Park Pavilion

Provi SE 1
Monash University v Monbulk
Monash University Sports Oval
Nunawading City v Noble Park Utd
Mahoneys Road Reserve
**Warragul Utd v Old Melburnians

news@goalweekly.com

KNOX BLITZ PORT IN SEASON OPENER

Knox City 4
Port Melbourne 0

Knox City got its 2008 campaign underway with the best possible result when it demolished Port Melbourne 4-0 on Saturday.

Three goals in four minutes late in the first half were enough to break down any resistance from the visitors and from then on Knox cruised to an effortless victory.

As a spectacle, the match was poor entertainment. It is sad to say that one of the best surfaces in Victoria has been allowed by the Council to degenerate into a paddock. This created a lottery at times as the ball became virtually uncontrollable on an inconsistent surface.

The early phase of the game was even as both sides struggled with the conditions. Whilst Knox had the better of the game territorially the young Port side showed a lot of determination. Khrapko was a handful up front all game as he battled manfully against the odds.

Knox suffered a blow when Giannopoulos went down with a serious knee injury in the 16th minute. However, Knox has much greater depth than last season and it was able to stay in control of the game.

The break through came after 37 minutes. Craig Kerr released Jack Hingert on the right and his cross was met by new signing Josh Valadon who gave the keeper no chance. This goal broke Port's resistance and they shipped two more goals within the next four minutes.

In the 40th minute a second goal came when a Peter Veljovic free kick from near the half way line evaded the Port keeper under pressure from Tony Saunders.

A minute later, it was 3-0 when Jack Hingert reacted first to Saunders' flick on from a Valadon throw-in to volley the ball home in style.

Port tried to take the game to Knox in the second half and for the first 20 minutes they had the majority of the possession but they created few chances andt stand-in keeper McEvoy was rarely troubled in the Knox goal.

The home side came back with a vengeance in the latter stages and Nedza and Hingert both went close before Edgar had a goal disallowed for a foul in the 75th minute.

A minute later, Saunders scored the fourth after Grubic had won the ball on the edge of the area when Port failed to clear their lines.

Nick Veljovic and Valadon both went close in the later stages as the home side looked to increase its lead.

Hingert and Valadon were the best for Knox whilst Khrapko battled away for the visitors.

Knox City: K. McEvoy, A. Edgar (B. Tronconi – 76th), C. Kerr, P. Veljovic, J. Hingert, N. Giannopoulos (M. Hoogendyk – 16th), N. Veljovic, Z. Buljabasic, L. Grubic – 70th), A. Saunders, J. Valadon, P. Nedza. Sub not used – M. Donkin.

Port Melbourne: E. Papastamatis, A. Klose, G. Blavas, P. Tsonis (R. Spano – 70th), D. Khrapko, D. Tsitos, B. Norton, M. Verkuylen, S. Pitruzzello, Q. Hoang, T. Aksoyloglou (D. Jovanovski – 59th). Subs not used – G. Lascaris, L. Arhontogiorgis.

State League Div 2 SE

By Bruce Darnell

BONTEMP'S TIMELY INTERVENTION

Langwarrin 1
Southern Stars 1

Southern Stars had striker Vincent Bontemp to thank for salvaging a point in a tough 1-1 battle away to Langwarrin in the first round of the State League Division One, on Saturday.

With the visitors down to 10 men for most of the second half, Langwarrin looked on track to record a first up win especially when midfielder Stewart Craig headed home a 76th minute goal.

However, substitute Bontemp's sweetly struck 83rd minute left foot volley enabled the visitors to grab a share of the points.

The home team created several chances in a scrappy, niggly first half, whilst the Stars struggled to keep possession and rarely troubled the Langwarrin defence. The 57th minute sending off of Stars' midfielder Berkan Sakaci for a second yellow, signalled a change to a three man attack for Langwarrin as they tried to take advantage of the extra man. The Stars stuck to their man on man defence even after going a goal behind to Craig's goal from a set piece.

Fortunately for the Stars, Adam Rudzki's long ball found Bontemps on the blind side of his marker, and the striker's first time volley gave Langy keeper Chris Jones no chance.

A happy Stars' coach Dean Hennessy commented after the match, " I thought the result was thoroughly deserved. The good thing is the character they showed. We kept playing, we got what we deserved. We deserved a point at least, if not more."

Regarding striker Vincent Bontemp, Hennessy commented, " What a difference he made. Not only did he score the goal but a couple of other half chances, put himself about. He's a great character. Once we get him fully fit, he'll be a big, big part of Southern Stars."

Langwarrin coach Gus McLeod reflected, " Sometimes when a man gets sent off, it goes against you. They try a wee bit harder and your organisation goes a wee bit, but in saying that, I think we had 80 per cent of the play especially in the first half. I thought we murdered them in the first half. But as soon as the sending off came, it seemed to unbalance us more than it unbalanced them which is the nature of the game."

State League Div 1

By George Stogiannou

Langwarrin boys celebrate scoring against Southern Stars on the weekend

GEORGIES STEAL DANDY'S THUNDER

Dandenong Thinder 0
Sunshine Georgies 2

If Dandenong Thunder had any doubts about how tough Division One will be this season, they were quickly put to rest in the space of five minutes when visitors Sunshine Georgies scored twice late in the game to seal the points.

The home team often threatened the visitors' goal throughout but Georgies' keeper Martin John proved impassable saving a number of Thunder efforts on goal. The visitors played conservatively in the first half with just the one striker and two wide attacking midfielders. However they changed to a two-striker system in the second half and began to put pressure on Dandenong keeper Yehya Dimasi whose uncertainty in the air seemed to give the visitors hope. A telling substitution saw the introduction of Peter Koutsoupias in the 64th minute and it was his cross which delivered the first goal for the Georgies. Koutsoupias's pass found ex-Thunder player, Paul Wilson who fired the ball into the net in the 84th minute. Just five minutes later, with the Thunder pushing forward in greater numbers in search of an equalizer, a turnover resulted in a quick Sunshine breakaway with the speedy Koutsoupias putting the finishing touch on the visitors' second goal.

A disappointed Thunder coach Zoran Trajceski, said after the game, " We lost concentration in the last 10 minutes. We didn't take our chances. There's still a long way to go. Definitely we will be there. We've got quality players."

A delighted Sunshine coach Andy O'Dell said afterwards, " Very happy. It's a good win. It's a long season. It's a big club George Cross. Last two or three years it's been in the doldrums. Hopefully we can get back in the Premier league next year…The game could have gone either way today with a little bit of luck. The last 15 minutes, with a little bit of fitness, we created a few extra chances."

State League Div 1

By George Stogiannou

BRUNSWICK TOO STRONG FOR CAIRNLEA

Brunswick City 1
Cairnlea 0

Brunswick City got their season off to a winning start accounting for newly promoted Cairnlea in the season opener at Dunstan Reserve.

The 1-0 score line does not really reflect the dominance shown by Brunswick throughout the match. A very stable defence thwarted most of the attacks created by Cairnlea in contrast to the opposite end of the ground where the Cairnlea custodian kept his team in the game on numerous occasions.

The actual game took a while to get going with Cairnlea squandering its first chance in the first minute after a misguided header sailed over the crossbar. As the half wore on Brunswick got stronger and stronger and began to create some excellent chances. Sanita's header in the 25' hit the crossbar but with a little composure could have made a sure thing of his opportunity.

A pile driver by Karas in the 30' was well saved by the Cairnlea keeper and minutes later saw O'Brein's dipping shot shave the crossbar on its way over. Further great saves by the Cairnlea shot stopper prevented Sanita, and Jackson from opening Brunswick's account.

Ciantar would have been well pleased with the opportunities created but not with the finishing. The second half saw Brunswick come out even more determined and won a free kick early in the second half but it too was well saved after struck it well. Cairnlea could have made Brunswick pay for all its misses when Jim Vouloumanos was dispossessed in the 50' by the Cairnlea striker. They too though suffered the same fate and shot over the bar.

The telling blow was cast a minute later when Brunswick again won a free kick. This time Franklin's attempt was hit with precision and accuracy curling around the wall and leaving the keeper motionless.

The well deserved 1-0 score line was maintained even though the game panned out to a battle of midfields and attrition in the last twenty minutes. Cairnlea threw everything they had at Brunswick in the final ten minutes but Brunswick's defence held true giving the home team the perfect start to the season.

Goalscorers: Adam Franklin 51'
Best: Franklin, Sanita, Jackson, Ismail, Karas

Line up: Dimitropoulos, Danos, Jackson J. Vouloumanos, Franklin (Papliakakis 87'), Karas, O'Brein, Ismail, Sanita (89' Dokolas), Stafrace , C. Vouloumanos (80' Athanasopoulos)

RESERVES

The reserve team could not repeat the performance of their senior counterparts and were beaten 1-0.

State League Div 2 NW

By Elias Simopoulos

BOO'S WORLD

With Mark Boric

Opening day of the State and Provisional Leagues was on Saturday for most clubs, so time to look through the Results Vault and find a Thumping of the Week.

Derby thumping (no, not what Paul Jewell gets upto in his home videos) would be Altona East 5 Altona City 0 in State Two North West. Ballarat Red Devils also got off to a great start in that league, winning 4-0 at Thomastown Devils with Danny Gnjidic continuing to establish an impressive record as a coach.

In State Two South East Knox City won 4-0 at Port Melbourne, but it wasn't enough to even get a place in the top two after the first round, with two 5-1 wins for Doncaster Rovers and Chelsea. I was pleased to note Anthony Hammer scored for Doncaster, I hope that gave him some Satisfaction. Eastern Lions also won 3-0 over South Springvale in their return to Division Two.

There were no thumpings in either State Three division. Provisional One North West was pretty quiet too, Glenroy Split beating Melbourne Tornado 2-0 in a Croatian Derby. Provisional One South East came up with another 5-1, Noble Park United beating the students of Monash University. It's not that bad a beating when you consider how many American students get shot every year. That's really harsh!

No real thumpings in the lower Provisional Leagues, but their Third Division did come up with some new teams. Surf Coast are in Three North West, and play at Jan Juc when the waves are not worth catching. Brunswick Zebras are in that league, proof that for every merger there is an equal amount of reformations a few years later. Dallas Eagles sound like they should be playing in the US Major Soccer League, if only they were better than being beaten 0-4 by Watsonia Heights.

The Bayside Argonauts are in Provisional Three South East. So are Keilor Wolves. Someone's map or compass is a little out, I reckon.

Gamba Osaka are in town this week, so lock up your whales. Archie Thompson has a long-term injury, but (Leandro) Love is not all we need. John Lennon was wrong when he claimed Love is the answer. He was shot in America, but not at a University. I digress.

Got hold of some footage I can use in my hooligan movie taken at Ruthern Station last week. Still chasing funding, may have to put in a big name American to attract the Yank investors. Have put the feelers out to the management of Gary Coleman and Erik Estrada.

A couple of wolves just hangin 'round downtown Keilor way yetserday...

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goal! Weekly

KATSA'S KORNER

With George Katsamboukas

KATSA'S KORNER 1-7

GRASS ROOTS GET KICKIN'

The punters were as happy this week as I am at J Walkers product sampling sessions.

The State and Provisional Leagues commenced in earnest, giving many 'addicts' a new lease of life.

The smell of Physios oil's wafted out of many dressing rooms and to some, this odour was better than the one coming from the $5 perfume used by the "Happy End" ladies at Melbourne's many Houses of ill repute.

The FFV Results Page had more hits on Saturday Evening than my J Walker bottle at 4 am in the morning, with punters wanting to check out the latest results.

And what a big week it has been at the House of Darebin with many Clubs finalising their player's registrations and transfers for the commencement of season 2008.

This seemed to go of without a hitch.

STRATEGIC TOUR OF DUTY

Mark and Co,(G'day Mark) go on tour this week around the State to present the FFV's Final Strategic Plan to all clubs, as "part of the consultative process"

As written in previous articles, Clubs no longer have any direct input as to where Soccer in Victoria is headed, this is now in the hands of Mark and Co, and the Regional Delegates voted in last year.

Many Clubs apathy when this system of power was passed in last year, without an AGM off all Clubs, will cost them dearly in seasons to come, as the Foxtel Cup as we know it is being systematically dismantled, and will be replaced by a new look Regional Competition, made up of newly formed regional or zone clubs.

Ripley's believe it or not has been replaced with the FFV's believe it or not…

GOING DOWN, GOING DOWN!

What a big week it was this week for Paul Jewell, Derby County's Gaffer who within one week was allegedly busted for his indiscretions with a buxom blonde 6 years ago, and then watched his team be officially relegated.

For the record, his strip of choice for his game with the buxom blonde was a black t-shirt.

There has been no notification of what his away strip was.

Strips aside, the UK continues to be a good country for Paul, who will be rewarded for his latest efforts with a 1.5 Million Sterling annual salary from Derby County!

INJURY TOLL THOMPSON

Over to the "Happy End" Asia Cup we go and the news for Ernie is not good with Archie Thompson missing the rest of the tournament with a knee injury.

Hopefully the recovery period will be short for Archie who has had not had much luck every time he represents the Green and Gold.

OLD SKOOL

For the Old School supporters amongst us, kick your kids off the Internet and go to www.pumpkinseedeaters.com

These guys have a great pod cast each week that not only focuses on today's soccer issues, but takes listeners back to the glory days of the NSL..

This web site joins Katsas stable of endorsed products.

The other Katsa endorsed products are J Walker and W N Field.

PAPPAS FIRED

The Scorer finally had something to do this week, and the number 1 came out in style, as Western Suburbs and Kon Pappas' parted company during the week.

The Scorer was so excited that he also pulled out numbers 2 and 3, Foxtel Cup Powerbrokers, over to you…

Enter Kenny" Aluminium Shin Guards" Murphy, who is back coaching in the Foxtel Cup, and will hope to improve the lads from Sunshine's form in the Foxtel Cup this season.

I still have memories of the 1984 NSL Grand Final between South Melbourne and Sydney Olympic where Kenny laid some very, shall we say, interesting tackles on the Olympic players.

Until next week.

This is Katsa – Just as you've known him.

The Foxtel Cup firing squad made its mark this week with Kon Pappas becoming the first coaching casualty of the season.

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Gas Bagging, News & Views

TSIGAN'S TSIGAR

With Mike Lilikakis

QUARTER TIME

I love to hear a good, sharp footy call.
You know the one.
Loud.
Funny.
Unpredictably predictable clichés.
But unfortunately in "our" code of football, there is a lack of depth in that department.
So at the risk of sounding melancholy, I'll try and make my cocker spiel worthwhile and as boring as a pig on a popsicle stick with an IQ of 146.

There is no such thing as "soccered" off the ground. It's kicked off the ground, period.
There is no such thing as a "good try", unless you're playing Rugby and you do a silly jump at the end of it.
"Great grab" has nothing to do with milk duds or Silicone Valley unfortunately.
"Outside the box" is not a dirty phrase, unless you're from Tasmania.

Intermission would be collaborated and revised by Naughty by Nature with hip hop hooray-ho-hey-ho-hey-ho-hey-ho.

"A fair result in the end" is only accompanied by a buxom babe who giggles at everything you say and wants to ride the baloney pony a few times, and six ways from Sunday.
"Did everything but score" smacks of a good try, and makes the abovementioned statement redundant.
A classification for "straight down his throat" would have me impeached.

ACCENT REQUIRED

For the following you must pick an accent of your choice, and read aloud the A-Typical coaches rebuttal in an interview with the media, when asked about the prospects of the game at hand.

Then go back and underline all the coaches' clichés and send your answers along with a six pack of Absynthe to:

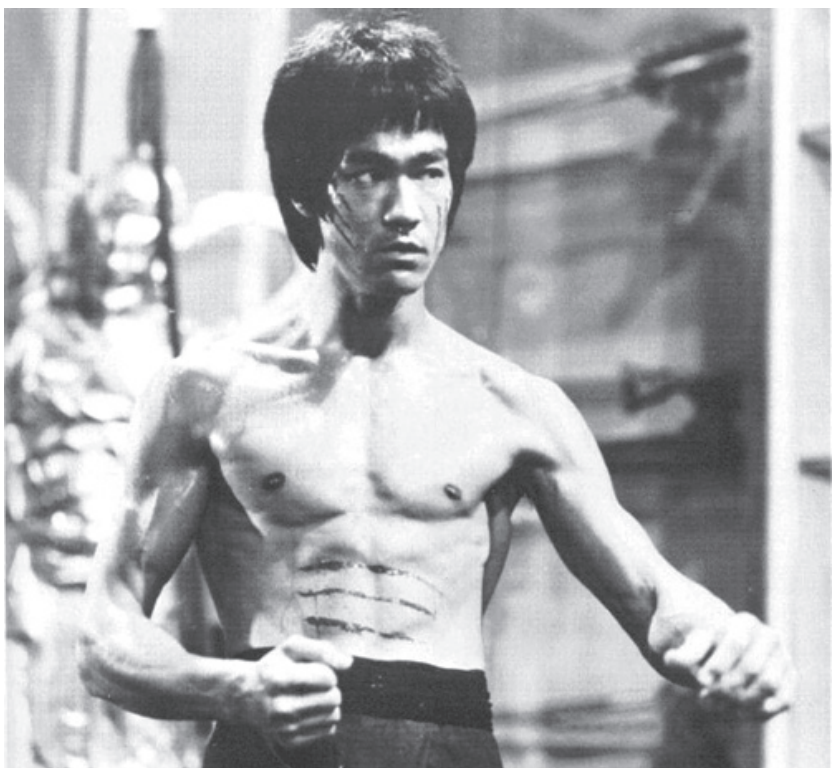
DUR FUSSBOL FOLLY

Behind the Hot Water Pipes
22 Sigmund Schtrasse
Little Bavaria
South Australia 5069

REPORTER: "Big game today…."

COACH: "Do not underestimate the mind games, it's a massive task.
We mustn't concede to this tough outfit.
We have to take the game to them.
Our fingers will be crossed that our solid back four won't fold because of the pre-match tension.
We are standing on the brink, and it's going to be a real test of character because we've got a long way to go.
If we're quick out of the blocks, make no mistake about it we'll go for it.
Although, we need a perfect start, the boys are all set for the big one and its going to be an electric atmosphere out there.
Our striker is capable of a goal or two as long as he doesn't get sucked in, because he's our target player.
Under the circumstances, I'm quietly confident we'll get a result out of this one.
The first goal is vital.
The boys are up for it.
League form counts for nothing.
You're only as good as your last game.
There is no easy game.
The club is all set for this glamour tie.
It's a big derby.
Nothing but a win will satisfy.
90 minutes is all you need.
The team will give 110%"

Beam me up Scotyy, and watch me work my magic on the whiteboard.



SO FAR SO GOOD

I'm a wee bit weirdly lactose intolerant.
Love cheese, hate milk.
The Soy ain't so bad, but I'd still rather have a block of corned beef and 4eggs deep fried in olive oil at 7am, than Granola or frikkin' cow chewin' muesli.
People are obsessed with health, gyms, health gyms and general well being.
All the booger eating philosophy philanthropists don't get a chance these days to truly express the notion of deep fried food and beer.
It's too good.
Ja, sure, you can put on weight, but only if you can't be frocked.

PARENTHESIS

Why is it that when you gamble, as Depeche Mode once quipped, "I just can't get enough." No, I don't gamble you stronzo. I detest all manner, form and fibre of that abominable creed. Destroyer of families, ruiner of lives, unfortunately this bug shows no mercy. One must squash the bug before bitten, lest the infection spread and totally corrupts the hard drive in your noggin.
Some claim to have the bug under control, or a mild form of sedation, but that is without merit. No one can control the bug. The bug controls you.
Mate, I'm only trying to help you.
What? You didn't ask for my advice?
Then get stuffed.
This manner of miscoded speech is found within all recesses of friendship with 21-25 year old know alls who tell you what to do, how to do it, when to do it, why to do it, and where to do it even though they have no idea how the conversation started in the first place, other than it being none of their business.

Quickus wordus of wisdom to the young ones.

Shut up.
You're all molly coddled.
You've had your arses wiped for far too long.
It wouldn't surprise me if your still breastfed, and not by your girl or boy friend you milfed out freakshows.

Next week we venture into the foray of gullibility, bumming fags off strangers in pubs, and a surprise look at racism, bigotry, anti everything-ism. For desert it's a case of clap on civil liberty.

What has this got to do with football?
Who cares?
Fresh fish is seldom found between chocolate mint thighs.

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South Melbourne v Green Gully Cavaliers

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Sat Apr 12	**Bolton v West Ham**	
	11.55 pm	(Viewers Choice)
Sat Apr 12	**Derby v Aston Villa**	
	11.55 pm	(Viewers Choice)
Sat Apr 12	**Tottenham v Middlesbrough**	
	11.55 pm	(Viewers Choice)
Sat Apr 12	**Reading v Fulham**	
	11.55 pm	(Viewers Choice)
Sun Apr 13	**Portsmouth v Newcastle**	
	2.10 am	Fox Sports 1
Sun Apr 13	**Liverpool v Blackburn**	
	10.25 pm	Fox Sports 1
Mon Apr 14	**Manchester United v Arsenal**	
	12.55 am	Fox Sports 1
Tues Apr 15	**Chelsea v Wigan**	
	4.55 am	Fox Sports 2

ASIAN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Wed 9 April	**Melbourne v Gamba Osaka**	
	7.30 pm	LIVE Fox Sports 1
Wed 9 April	**Binh Duong v Adelaide**	
	9.30 pm	DELAY Fox Sports 1

COCA-COLA CHAMPIONSHIP

Tues 8 April	**Stoke v Crystal Palace**	
	4.30 am	Fox Sports 3

You can catch Melbourne Victory's Asian Champions League battle against Japan's Gamba Osaka on Fox Sports 1 this Wednesday night.

FOX SPORTS

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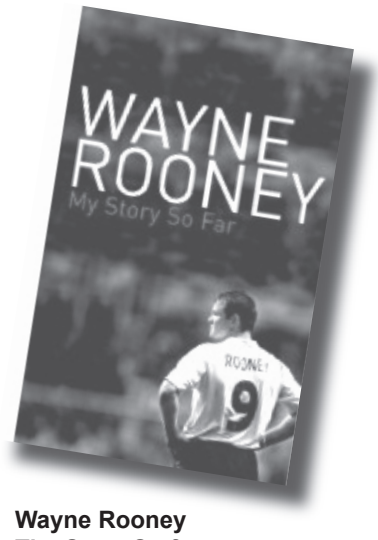

Synopsis

At just 20 years of age, Wayne Rooney is already one of the best footballers in the world. From his early years in Croxteth, his Premiership debut as a 16-year-old, his ebullient entrance on the international scene in Euro 2004, to the drama of the 2006 World Cup, this is his amazing story so far. What is the true story behind the most talked-about person in British football? Were there signs of things to come in his upbringing in the back streets of Liverpool? What were the early influences that shaped his character? And how has the meteoric rise to fame and fortune affected this seemingly shy yet prodigiously gifted youngster? For the first time in his own words, Rooney opens up about the defining years of his life as the son of a working-class family, brought up in a council house with his Everton-mad family.

Wayne Rooney
The Story So far

Thanks to our friends at **Melbourne Sports Books** here's your chance to win a fantastic football prize.

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Q. The record has since been surpassed by Theo Walcott, but in February 2003 Wayne Rooney became the youngest player ever to make his debut for England. Who was it against?

a. Austria
b. Australia
c. Denmark

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English Football Pub Quiz ? ? ? ?

1. Name 2 teams in the EPL whose name starts with the same letter that they end with.
.....

2. There is only one team out of the 4 divisions in England and the 4 divisions in Scotland that have a 'j' in their name. Who is it?
.....

3. Who was the last player to score a hat-trick at the old Wembley Stadium?
.....

4. Out of the 92 teams, whose ground is at the highest altitude?
.....

5. Who is the only player to score in a Manchester, Merseyside and Glasgow derby?
.....

6. What was used in the 1973 FA Cup Final and never used again?
.....

7. Which French player won league championship winners medals in consecutive seasons with three different clubs?
.....

8. Which 2 players played in the last FA Cup final and the last England international at the old Wembley?
.....

9. Name 3 England captains who have played for Scunthorpe United?
.....

10. Name the only team out of the 92 whose name starts with 5 consonants.
.....

This England captain might help you with question 9

goal! Weekly

Answers

1. Liverpool, Aston Villa.
2. St Johnstone
3. Grant Best, Sky Sports director, in a media match a month before the ground shut.
4. West Bromwich Albion at 551 feet.
5. Andrei Kanchelskis
6. An orange ball.
7. Eric Cantona: 1991 Ligue 1 with Olympique de Marseille, 1992 1st Division with Leeds United and 1993 Premiership with Manchester United.
8. Gareth Southgate and Gareth Barry.
FA Cup Final was on 20th May 2000. They played for Aston Villa. The result was 1-0 to Chelsea.
International was on 7th October 2000. England lost 1-0 to Germany in a World Cup qualifier.
9. Kevin Keegan, Ray Clemence & Ian Botham!
10. Crystal Palace

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UNITED FAVOURITES TO PROGRESS

Last eight still tightly poised in even ECL contests

The first legs of the European Champions League quarter finals produced exhibitions of class, entertainment, controversy and passion, illustrating the tournament's credentials as football's highest quality club competition.

English Premier League leaders Manchester United battled out a superb encounter with AS Roma, securing a 2-0 victory at the Stadio Olimpico, which sees them in the box seat to progress to the semi-finals for the second season running.

An outstanding header from United's Christiano Ronaldo, his 36th goal in all competitions, and a tap in by Wayne Rooney prevented the Romans from exacting revenge against the Red Devils for last year's horror 7-1 loss at Old Trafford.

In a match that displayed an exceptional level of footballing ability, both teams paraded terrific technical skill and spells of top-class possession and one-touch passing.

Roma had several chances throughout the match, but failed to capitalise; guilt edged opportunities falling to Alberto Aquilani, Mirko Vucinic, and Christian Panucci, all of whom should have put the Serie A side back in the contest.

The absence of Roma's influential Italian midfielder Francesco Totti may have been the difference between the two sides, with the 2006 World Cup winner's nonattendance causing an obvious lack of penetration for the home side.

Totti is on track to recover from a knee injury in time for the second leg clash in Manchester, and his presence may provide an important and much needed morale boost if Roma are to overturn the 2-0 deficit away from home.

United boss Alex Ferguson's only issue of concern will be replacing solid Serbian defender Nemanja Vidic who will be out for three weeks after twisting his leg awkwardly in Rome.

Luciano Spalletti's Roma will need a miracle to advance past United, with the Giallorossi needing to win by a margin of three goals or more at the Theatre of Dreams to reach the semi-finals.

Whilst United are firm favourites to progress to the semis, elsewhere in Champions league first-leg action the other three ties appear more evenly poised.

English rivals Arsenal and Liverpool remain deadlocked after their match at the Emirates Stadium finished 1-1, however, the club from Merseyside did grab a vital away goal to take back to Anfield, which may prove crucial in the overall outcome of the two-legged tie.

Liverpool will be extremely pleased with the result, after absorbing large amounts of pressure from the Gunners who dominated 65% of possession, and the majority of the contest.

In stark contrast, Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger was fuming post-match, after his side experienced a combination of bad luck and a controversial refereeing decision.

An Emmanuel Adebayor header saw Arsenal one up after 23 minutes, but Liverpool equalised through a Dirk Kuyt goal three minutes later, after excellent lead-up work from Steven Gerrard, who rounded three players before placing a perfect cross to Kuyt's feet.

Liverpool played the remainder of the match with ten men behind the ball, and the wall of black shirts defended sufficiently to prevent the Gunners from claiming victory.

Tactically astute Liverpool manager Rafa Benitez' knowledge for European competition may have seen his side play extremely negatively, but his pre-match plans would have been to sit back, absorb pressure and play for a score-draw – and he achieved just that.

Arsenal will claim they were robbed by the referee, with an extremely controversial penalty decision going against them in the 65th minute, Kuyt dragging down Aleksandr Hleb in the box, and penalties have been given for less.

The two sides fought out another entertaining 1-1 draw at the Emirates on Saturday in the English Premier League, and although both teams rested important personnel for the second leg match in the Champions League, Liverpool may have won a slight psychological advantage heading into Wednesday's match, by severely denting Arsenal's league title hopes.

Arsenal are capable of scoring at Anfield, illustrated by Cesc Fabregas' goal in a Premier League clash earlier in the season, but Liverpool have the ability in Europe to utilise their fans as a 12th man which invariably boosts their side and simultaneously prevents opposition from rising to the occasion.

2006 Champions Barcelona escaped a tight contest with German side Schalke, grabbing a vital away goal in a 1-0 victory in Gelsenkirchen.

Bojan Krkic became the second youngest ever scorer in the Champions League, at the age of 17, when he finished the only goal of the match for the 'Blaugranes' in the 12th minute.

Schalke boss Mirko Slomka had urged his side to take advantage of home support provided by a 53,000 strong crowd at the Arena AufSchalke and placed Gerald Asamoah, Kevin Kuranyi and Halil Alintop up front to provide some firepower.

Stars Ronaldinho, Deco and Lionel Messi were absent for the Spanish side, but the Catalan giants were more efficient than their opposition, Schalke failing to capitalise on dominating chances created, hitting 24 shots compared to Barcelona's five, with no end product.

The result leaves Barcelona in a superior position to qualify, and presents Schalke with an uphill battle to progress; the Germans needing nothing less than a win at the Nou Camp, and even in the event of a victory, Barca's away goal may prove a dividing factor in the Spanish side's favour.

Chelsea's inconsistent form under Avram Grant's management continued in their match away to Turkish side Fenerbahce, the Blues squandering a 1-0 lead to eventually lose 2-1.

In an intimidating Sukru Saracoglu Stadium, the Londoners succumbed to goals from Colin Kazim-Richards and Deivid – who cancelled out his first-half own goal – to hand Zico's side a slim advantage to take to Stamford Bridge.

It was the first time in six Champions League games that Chelsea had conceded, and they, like Schalke, will be ruing missed opportunities heading into the second leg.

Chelsea should be much stronger at the Bridge, however, and a 1-0 home victory will be suffice to proceed to a potential all English semi-final.

After an impressive 2-0 away win in Rome against Roma, Manchester United are in the box seat seat to progress to the European Champions League Semi-Finals.

ECL Quarter Final 1st Leg Results

Arsenal 1-1 Liverpool
Fenerbahce 2-1Chelsea
Roma 0-2 Man Utd
Schalke 04 0-1 Barcelona

2nd Legs to be played Wednesday 9th April and Thursday 10th April (AEST) - KO 4.30am. Games will be telecast on SBS & Foxtel Sports.

By Julius Ross

Champion Reporter

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goal! Weekly

Melbourne Victory v Gamba Osaka

VICTORY FACES ACL ACID TEST

J-League giant to visit Melbourne on Wednesday

Asian Champions League debutants Melbourne Victory will encounter yet another tough test when they confront J-League giant Gamba Osaka on Wednesday.

Victory will face an uphill battle to progress from the group stage if they fail to achieve a positive result against the Japanese club at Telstra Dome.

After suffering their first Champions League defeat against Thai opponents Chonburi FC on match day two, Victory sit in third position and currently out of contention for group stage progression.

A 3-1 away lost in Thailand saw Victory's hopes of reaching the knock-out stages severely dented, as the A-League team struggled in hot and humid conditions against Chonburi, eventually succumbing to two late goals.

Danny Allsopp had given the away side a glimmer of hope by cancelling the game's opener from Chonburi's Brazilian import, Ney 'Fabiano' de Oliveira, but a 30-yard screamer from Cameroonian Stephane Baga in the 79th minute and a second from the same player in injury time, knocked Victory from pole position in the group.

Whilst only one point behind joint leaders Osaka and Chonburi, Victory will have to accomplish significant home and away victories in order to maintain hope of continuing to the next stage of the tournament.

Only the top team in the group advances to the quarter-finals, and despite commencing the competition in superb fashion with a 2-0 victory against Korean outfit Chunnam Dragons - which saw them top the group, Victory were knocked back down to earth in their first away match in Supachalasai National Stadium, Bangkok.

However, Victory coach Ernie Merrick remains positive heading into the match against Osaka and believes that his side can reverse their fortunes and put their Asian Champions League campaign back on track.

A ccording to Merrick, Victory will hit back in their remaining fixtures, with the Melbourne coach drawing on the fact that all teams in Group G have dropped points thus far in the campaign, which provides a confidence boost for his side.

Gamba has already underlined its credentials as quarter final contenders, through two displays of determination and stamina, in their opening group fixtures.

The J-League team scored an injury time equaliser against Chonburi on match day one, and came from two goals down to secure a 4-3 Victory over Chunnam Dragons in their second match.

Gamba will be looking to further stretch their lead in the group over Victory when they travel to Melbourne, with confidence high in the Japanese camp after their come-from-behind success over Chunnam.

Goals from Brazilian forward Victor Simoes and captain Kim Tae-Su appeared to have given the Dragons a comfortable 2-0 lead in Gwangyang, but Gamba bounced back through goals from striker Ruji Bando and midfielders Takahiro Futagawa and Michihiro Yasuda to make the score 3-2.

With Archie Thonpson out injured Danny Allsopp will have to step up to the plate and lead Victory's charge in the Asian Champions League.

Former Japanese international and present Gamba Osaka coach Nishino believes his team go all the way in the ACL.

Osaka survived a late scare when Tae-Su converted a penalty to make the score 3-3, but Bando buried his second to secure a first group victory for his side.

Akira Nishino, Osaka's manager, stated at the beginning of the tournament that his aims were to win the title; however, after a surprise draw against Chonburi and the hard-fought victory over Chunnam, Nishino's thoughts must be now focussed on first progressing into the quarter finals.

Nishino is adamant that his side is more thoroughly prepared and determined than in 2006 when they last participated in the Champions League, when they failed o progress beyond the group stage, losing to eventual winners Jeonbuk Motors.

After a two year absence, Nishino believes his side can go all the way this year and the team has already experienced a taste for silverware, winning the final of the Pan Pacific Championships against MLS side Houston Dynamo in February.

Gamba's second appearance in the Asian Champions League comes after they finished third in the J-League last season, their only other appearance in 2006, a result of winning the J-League in 2005.

As well as finishing a respectable third, Osaka also lifted the 2007 J-League Cup and Super Cup last season and the team has managed consistent league form over the last four seasons, sitting third or above at the end of each campaign.

Gamba's squad consists of several top class players who have the ability to decide the match against the Victory.

Stocky Japanese international Yasuhito Endo has scored 49 goals in 181 appearances for Gamba, and as a result has earned 64 caps for his country.

Endo's sensational passing skills, dribbling expertise, free-kick technique, and ability to play successfully in both attacking and defensive midfield, will make him the target man for Victory to subdue.

The partnership of Japan international Ryuji Bando and new signing Lucas Severino will also prove difficult for Victory to contain, with the pair scoring three goals between them in two matches.

Founded in 1991, the team's name comes from the Japanese word gambaru, which means 'to stand firm' or 'to do your best.' Victory can expect Gamba to do just that, in this key encounter.

AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2008

Group A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	+/-	Pts
AL ITTIHAD FC (SAUDI ARABIA)	2	2	0	0	2	0	2	6
AL ITTIHAD (SYR)	2	1	0	1	2	1	1	3
KURUVCHI FC (UZBEKISTAN)	2	1	0	1	2	1	1	3
SEPAHAN (IRAN)	2	0	0	2	0	4	-4	0

Group B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	+/-	Pts
SAIPA (IR IRAN)	2	1	1	0	3	1	2	4
AL QUWA AL JAWIYA (IRQ)	2	1	1	0	1	0	1	4
KUWAIT SC (KUWAIT)	2	0	2	0	1	1	0	2
AL WASL SPORTS CLUB (UAE)	2	0	0	2	0	3	-3	0

Group C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	+/-	Pts
AL KARAMA (SYR)	2	1	1	0	5	2	3	4
AL SADD SPORT CLUB (QATAR)	2	1	1	0	4	3	1	4
AL AHLI (SAUDI ARABIA)	2	0	1	1	2	3	-1	1
AL WAHDA (UAE)	2	0	1	1	3	6	-3	1

Group D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	+/-	Pts
AL QADSIA (KUWAIT)	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	4
AL GHARAFA (QAT)	2	0	2	0	3	3	0	2
ARBIL (IRAQ)	2	0	2	0	2	2	0	2
PAKHTAKOR (UZBEKISTAN)	2	0	1	1	2	3	-1	1

Group E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	+/-	Pts
ADELAIDE UNITED FC (AUSTRALIA)	2	1	1	0	2	0	2	4
CHANGCHUN YATAI FC (CHINA PR)	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	4
POHANG STEELERS(KOR)	2	1	0	1	4	3	1	3
BINH DUONG FC (VIETNAM)	2	0	0	2	2	6	-4	0

Group F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	+/-	Pts
KASHIMA ANTLERS FC (JAPAN)	2	2	0	0	15	1	14	6
BEIJING GUOAN FC (CHINA PR)	2	2	0	0	7	3	4	6
NAM DINH FC (VIETNAM)	2	0	0	2	1	9	-8	0
KRUNG THAI BANK (THAILAND)	2	0	0	2	3	13	-10	0

Group G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	+/-	Pts
CHONBURI (THAILAND)	2	1	1	0	4	2	2	4
GAMBA OSAKA (Japan)	2	1	1	0	5	4	1	4
MELB VICTORY (AUSTRALIA)	2	1	0	1	3	3	0	3
CHUNNAM DRAGONS (KOREA REP.)	2	0	0	2	3	6	-3	0

NEXT ROUND

BINH DUONG FC (VIETNAM)
v
ADELAIDE UNITED FC (AUSTRALIA)

YATAI FC (CHINA PR)
v
POHANG STEELERS(KOR)

DRAGONS (KOREA REP.)
v
CHONBURI FOOTBALL CLUB (THAILAND)

MELBOURNE VICTORY FC (AUSTRALIA)
v
GAMBA OSAKA (Japan)
Wed 9th April, Telstra Dome, KO 7.30pm

By Julius Ross

Photos by John Punshon

METROSTARS KEEP 100%RECORD

Campbelltown City Red Devils coach Rocky Aloisi expected to take away nothing less than 3 points in Round 4 as his team hosted Super League surprise package Modbury Jets in the 2nd vs 3rd top of the table clash.

But the Jets, flying high after notching up 2 wins from 3 matches, proved they can match it with the best. Spectators witnessed a game of two halves, Campbelltown dominating in the first outplaying Modbury and creating opportunities, but their scoring chances being unrewarded.

The second half saw a very different Modbury on the pitch, Jets coach Duane Gray throwing all ten men behind the ball to produce their signature tough, gritty style of football, led from the back by Nathan Day playing a stellar captain's game.

With each wave of attack the Jet's youngsters Rhys Devlin, Russell Clayton and Konrad Kosznik opened up the field, challenging the Red Devils back line of Paul Savio, Christopher D'Alfonso and ex Jet's defender Michael Menechella playing against his former club.

Some great goalkeeping by the Devil's Nigel Young and the inexperience of the Jets youngsters, both contributing factors to the nil-all final score, obviously disappointing the home side. An upbeat Jet's coach Duane Gray was happy with the point, adding that his lads were working hard to prove the so-called football experts wrong.

"Today we played a very, very good side and deserve our point for pure work ethic. We still have a long way to go, but the more belief our players have in themselves, the harder they will be to beat."

In other games Adelaide Blue Eagles were defeated by Adelaide City 1-0. Marden Sports Complex was the place to be to witness the match touted by most as a grudge match between Presidents rather than teams, both eastern suburbs sides were sitting on two wins and a loss from the three rounds.

City's sides was strengthened with the return of duo Paul Pezos and Carl Veart back after serving suspension and Eagles coach Pat de Vita making an interesting choice, going with lone striker Fortunato Filleti as his sole attack, but the two teams gave too much respect to each other throughout the game.

City player/coach Damian Mori left it late in the game to bring himself on along with Veart to try to inject some spark into the game, but the score-line remained unchanged. Although Blue Eagles had the majority of the ball, missed opportunities cost them the game, the lone goal of the match coming from City's new signing ex A-league player Kristian Rees.

Fans were treated again to free entry at TK Shutter Reserve as home-side MetroStars continued on their flawless start to the 2008 season with a win over Raiders 2-0.

In a great game of football, Raiders' big-men backline of Scott Morrisson, Daniel Menechella and Michael Cartwright had a job to do on new signing Scott Tunbridge (ex Newcastle Jets) who bagged both goals, proving to be worth his weight in gold, as he continues to score each match, along with his team mate Michael Mattriciani, both taking their tally to five goals from the four rounds.

Although Raiders labelled the 'draw specialists', put up some good, stiff competition for the unbeaten MetroStars, they were unable to prevent suffering their first loss for the season, with the Stars' win cementing their top spot on the ladder, 3 points clear of last year's Champions Adelaide City.

Croydon Kings 0 – Adelaide Galaxy 3. At Polonia Park, Croydon Kings with only the single point from three matches needed to lift their form to tackle the goal scoring abilities of Adelaide Galaxy. With both teams suffering losses in round three, both King's coach Paul Shillabeer and Galaxy's coach Carl Maynard were looking for their chargers to dig deep and put in a great performance to come away with the three points. But with the likes of Galaxy's Greg Hagias, Steven Grelli, Shaun McGreevy and captain Paul Karritevlis all scoring in previous weeks, it was going to take a very good defensive game for Croydon to take the points. Add to that the midweek move of Michael Doyle from Raiders to Galaxy to strengthen their defence, the Kings had all odds stacked against them and unfortunately were unable to stop three goals from McGreevy, Karritevlis and Grelli going past their experienced keeper Anthony Stam. Galaxy's coach Carl Maynard, on a mission to set his team back on track said,

The Kristian Crunch. Four Blue Eagles players surrounding Adelaide City's Kristian Rees still didn't stop him scoring the only goal for the match.

SUPER LEAGUE RESULTS

Adelaide Eagles	0	Adelaide City	1
Campbelltown City	0	Modbury	0
Croydon	0	Adelaide Galaxy	3
MetroStars	2	Raiders	0

SUPER LEAGUE STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
MetroStars	4	4	0	0	10	3	7	12
Adelaide City	4	3	0	1	6	3	3	9
Campbelltown	4	2	2	0	5	2	3	8
Modbury	4	2	1	1	5	3	2	7
Adelaide Galaxy	4	2	0	2	10	6	4	6
Blue Eagles	4	2	0	2	4	3	1	6
Raiders	4	0	3	1	2	4	-2	3
White City	4	1	0	3	4	10	-6	3
Para Hills	4	0	1	3	3	9	-6	1
Croydon	4	0	1	3	2	8	-6	1

" Although we got a win, we were not as fluent as we can be. We've got a lot more to offer than that."

White City Warriors 3 - Para Hills Knights 2. In the last game of the round at Frank Mitchell Park on Saturday night, coach Adrian Santrac's Warriors took on the Knights in a game that was a 'must win' for both sides. Having narrowly lost their last weeks game by 1 goal to nil to Adelaide City,

The Warriors were determined to earn some valuable points on their road to recovery after their dismal start to the season and all teams know the Warriors at home on a Saturday night means a very tough match. In a not so pretty game of football, end to end and both sides matching goal for goal, a determined Warriors side dug in and lifted their work rate rather than dropping heads, even after conceding goals which enabled them to grind out their first win in front of their usual strong and vocal home crowd.

While Warrior's Chad Bugeja scored a brace at the expensive of a ham string injury and veteran Kris Trajanovski also on the injury list with his groin, it may be another uphill battle for the Warriors as they establish their road to recovery.

The win rockets them to 8th position on the ladder, leaving Para Hills Knights and Croydon Kings as cellar dwellers on the one solitary point.

Next week sees a break from competition as 32 teams compete in Round 2 of the 2008 FFSA Cup with the biggest match undoubtedly being the battle between old foes Raiders and White City Woodville at Croatian Sports Centre.

By Nat Adamopulos

Photo by Adam Butler

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SHARKS, MANLY RULE THE ROOST

Marconi hits rock bottom after losing derby against APIA

The Sutherland Sharks held on to their slender lead in the NSW Premier League, seeing off competition newcomers Macarthur Rams at Seymour Shaw Park on Saturday evening.

After struggling to unlock a stubborn Rams defence for most of the match, Sutherland sealed the points with two goals in the final 20 minutes. First Shane Lyons, so influential for the Sharks this season, stabbed the ball home following a goalmouth scramble; three minutes from time, the prolific Brad Boardman added yet another to his season tally to secure the win for Sutherland.

The home side were lucky to finish with eleven men, with Brendan Gan perpetrating a horrible studs-up challenge on Macarthur's Adel El-Jamal fifteen minutes from the close.

In Saturday's other match, Blacktown City again failed to register their first win of the campaign, drawing 2-2 against Penrith-Nepean at CUA Stadium.

Manly United kept up the pressure on Sutherland, scoring a last-minute killer in a 2-1 home win over the other competition new boys, the West Sydney Berries. Sydney United, meanwhile, fell further behind the leading two, losing 2-0 at home to Wollongong.

GAME OF THE ROUND

APIA Leichhardt – Marconi Stallions

Marconi's miserable start to the campaign continued, with a 2-0 loss in the Italian derby against APIA at Lambert Park.

Although Marconi began well, with Matthew Gordon causing problems on the left and Tallan Martin heading a useful Tolgay Ozbey cross over the bar, it was APIA who opened the scoring on 18 minutes. A clever lob over the top by Franco Parisi released the quick Stephen Kayes on the right; he, in turn, found frontman Robert Younis, who got to the by-line and squared the ball to an unmarked Kayes, who had made a shrewd diagonal run into the box. Although he took a moment to control the ball, Kayes managed to slide the ball home with some ease.

Marconi continued to squander chances. Following a misplaced back-header, Tolgay Ozbey was left with a clear run at goal; however, after rounding the 'keeper, he failed to keep his shot under the bar. A free kick from Nahuel Arrarte was saved well by APIA's impressive 'keeper Matthew Nash, and soon afterwards a swerving corner from Gordon was blocked on the line by Daniel Clifford.

APIA doubled their lead late in the second half. A corner was half-cleared to Christian Care, who prodded the ball half-heartedly back into the area. The Marconi defence made a collective decision to leave the clearance to someone else, and Robert Younis had all the time in the world to bang the ball past Cem Akilli in the Marconi goal.

In the second half, Marconi made the majority of the running, with APIA's Younis and Parisi looking tired and uninspired up front. The home side's backline, however, remained defiant until Tolgay Ozbey finally began to show the form that garnered him the NSWPL Golden Boot in 2007. Skipping past Clifford in the area, he was upended by APIA's captain, Michael Galluzzo. Penalty.

Ozbey took the kick himself, but Matthew Nash saved magnificently, diving to his right.

There were no more chances of note, and APIA expertly forced the ball into the corners in the final minutes, running down the clock most efficiently.

FOOTBALL NSW

NSW RESULTS

Sydney United 0 Wollongong FC 2 (I Prinzoski 8/56m), Sydney Olympic Bankstown City FC Postponed, APIA Leichhardt Tigers 2 (R Younis 15m S Kayes 36m) Marconi Stallions 0, Manly United FC 2 (Own goal 57m C Midgley 90m) West Sydney Berries 1 (G Sama 71m).

NSW STANDINGS

		P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pts
1	Sutherland Sharks	6	5	1	0	15	5	10	16
2	Manly United FC	6	5	0	1	16	4	12	15
3	Sydney Olympic	5	3	1	1	11	5	6	10
4	Sydney United	6	3	1	2	9	7	2	10
5	Wollongong FC	6	3	1	2	6	8	-2	10
6	Penrith Nepean	6	2	3	1	9	5	4	9
7	A.P.I.A Leichhardt	6	2	2	2	8	8	0	8
8	West Sydney Berries	6	2	1	3	9	9	0	7
9	Bankstown City	5	1	2	2	3	8	-5	5
10	Macarthur Rams	6	0	2	4	3	10	-7	2
11	Blacktown City	6	0	2	4	4	14	-10	2
12	Marconi Stallions	6	0	2	4	2	12	-10	2

By Mike Salter
in Sydney

OLYMPIC BURSTS OUT OF BLOCKS

Zebras stutter in southern title defence

Tilford Zebras have begun their defence of the southern Tasmanian Premier League title in disastrous fashion, collecting just one point from a possible six in their first two outings.

Zebras lost 3-2 to Hobart Olympic in their opening match on Saturday night, 29 March, then drew 1-1 with Kingborough Lions United in their next match on Friday night, 4 April.

Saturday night games are an innovation by Football Federation Tasmania and it paid off this time. The weather was perfect and a large crowd attended what is one of the tradition derbies in Tasmanian soccer.

Both teams looked resplendent in their new strips, but it was Olympic which caught the eye as it raced to a 2-0 lead by the interval and then 3-0 early in the second half through goals by Christo Tsakiris, Ben Backhaus and Michael Bulis.

The Zebras were shocked, but gradually fought their way back and goals by Ben Crosswell and Andrew Telega made it a goal the difference with four minutes remaining.

Olympic held on for the three points and they occupied top spot on the ladder on Saturday, 5 April, when they won their second match, this time a 6-3 away triumph over Metro at North Chigwell.

Christo Tsakiris netted a brace before the interval, while Chris Tsimiklis and Kosta Grillas also got on the score-sheet as the visitors led 4-2 at half-time.

An own-goal and a strike by Bulis completed the rout. Metro's three teenaged scorers were Jason Dawes, Andrew Robb and Aaron Marney.

Kingborough Lions United....earned a point against Tilford Zebras.

South Hobart are second on goal-difference but level with Olympic on 6 points after two laborious wins.

They beat University 3-1 on Sunday, 30 March, through goals by David Cooper, Tom Roach and Billy Gasparinatos. Alexis Bull scored a great individual goal for the Students.

Then, on Saturday, 5 April, South Hobart eked out a 2-0 win over Clarence United, Gasparinatos netting two second-half goals against a Clarence side that won its first match the previous Sunday 1-0, through an own goal by Chris Wass, against New Town Eagles.

Clarence missed a couple of sitters in the opening half and paid for it when South gradually wore them down after Roach moved from the attack into midfield and started setting up his strikers.

Kingborough Lions United managed to earn a point against the Zebras and move off the bottom of the ladder and up to seventh place.

After a goalless opening half, Crosswell put Zebras ahead from Paul Cairns's pass, but substitute Joel Schuth headed the Lions level near the end.

In the northern Tasmanian Premier League, Devonport City are the early pace-setters with two resounding victories after two rounds.

Devonport thrashed Launceston 9-1 on the opening day of the season, and they followed that up with a 7-1 win against Ulverstone.

The former giants of northern Tasmania, and indeed, the entire State, Launceston City, are struggling with a new young side and have lost their first two games.

Billy Gasparinatos...scored both South Hobart's goals against Clarence.

Peter Savill, the former Leeds United player, who is coaching City, has a lot of work to do.

Up to half a dozen of City's veteran stars retired at the end of last season and a rebuilding program will be required before City are again a force to be reckoned with.

FOOTBALL FEDERATION TASMANIA

By Walter Pless
Photos by Walter Pless

TARTAN TALK with Nic Townsend

THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

This year's Champions League looks set to replicate the top four of the English Premier League, albeit with Barcelona replacing one of the English clubs. Fenerbahçe's 2-1 win over Chelsea this week proved the only real upset in the Champions League. With the next tie to be played at Stamford Bridge, there seems little to stop English clubs dominating this year's competition for the second year running.

Manchester United hold a 2-0 lead over AC Roma with the next leg at home, while Arsenal and Liverpool played out a 1-1 draw.

The Gunners were easily the better team last Wednesday but it couldn't quite find that extra goal. Controversy ensured when Dirk Kuyt clearly brought down Alexander Hleb in the box and Arsenal were denied a penalty. Referee Pieter Vink's decision had added significance when it was later revealed that he and Kuyt are both from the same part of Holland, leading to a host of conspiracy theories from bitter Arsenal fans. Liverpool chose to rest Fernando Torres for their league tie against Arsenal, suggesting Rafael Benitez has conceded defeat in the premiership and is prioritising the Champions League.

SOUTHAMPTON

Southampton dropped into the relegation zone of the Championship this
week and look set to join Leeds United and Nottingham Forest in the
"what are they doing in League One" club. While the Saints have never quite emulated the feats of either Leeds or Forest, they were until recent years regular Premiership contenders. In 2003 they played in the FA Cup Final, and when they did get relegated it was after 27 years in the top flight.

Since leaving the Premiership in 2004 Southampton have managed to maintain a strong Championship side and usually look likely to jump straight back up. Last season they only just lost in the play-offs.

However the club has slumped badly since December and have really struggled since manager George Burley left to the take the Scotland job. They've only managed two wins in the past 20 games and have gone from potential play-off outsiders to likely relegation candidates.

Matters will only be compounded for suffering fans as their fierce south coast rival Portsmouth sit sixth in the Premiership and have secured a spot in the FA Cup final.

MANAGING THE OLD FIRM.

Supporters of the two Old Firm clubs are so notoriously fickle it came as no surprise that Gordon Strachan's future was being debated the minute after their 1-0 loss to Rangers last Saturday. The win was Rangers fourth derby win in a row and just about clinches the premiership. Celtic now need to win every game left including two more matches against the Gers, and also hope Rangers drop points elsewhere.

Strachan's critics claim the past two premierships were won due to Rangers ineptitude rather than any particular brilliance on Celtic's behalf. On paper the Bhoys do appear the stronger side and even many Rangers fans will admit their own team this is year is far from their strongest. Some of Strachan's signings such as Scott Brown, Massimo Donati, Evander Sno, Thomas Gravesen have failed to meet expectations.

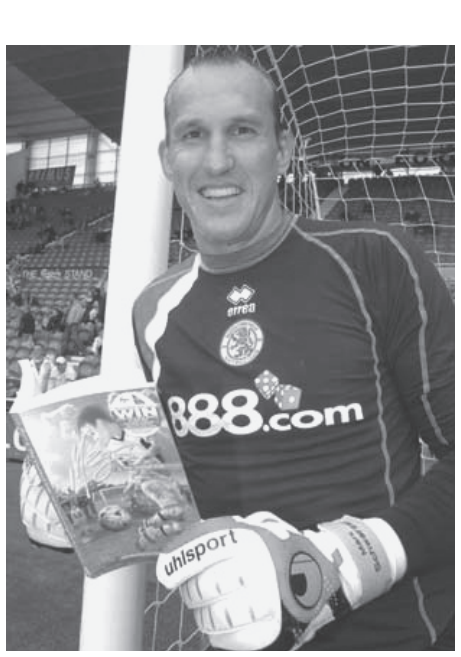
But on the other hand, on a very limited budget Strachan has managed to land Artur Boruc, Scott McDonald and Shansuke Nakamura. Under his tenure Celtic have also qualified for the final 16 of Champions League two years running. Pre-Strachan Celtic had never progressed beyond the group stages and he managed to do it twice. Even if his two premierships came from weakened opposition, the same cannot be said of the club's European success.

Walter Smith doesn't need to be told of the lack of job security at an Old Firm club. The Rangers board sacked him in 1998 having failed to win the league title. The fact he had won the last six league titles previous seemingly counting for nothing.

And as Smith has learnt this season, even winning isn't always enough to appease fans. Since taking over a demoralised Rangers 15 months ago, the club now find themselves in a strong position to win the premiership and Scottish Cup, have already won the League Cup, and are even an outside chance of winning the UEFA Cup. Yet Smith continues to get criticised by many supporters because his pragmatic defensive style of play.

AND FINALLY…

Credit must go to Socceroo keeper Mark Schwarzer for his ability to combine community service with personal business interests. This week the Premier League announced their Reading Stars program. In an effort to encourage young football fans to read more, each club has nominated a player to select their favourite children's book. Copies of each book will then be donated to selected libraries. Scott Carson chose Roald Dahl and Matthew Upson went with John Steinbeck. Mark Schwarzer chose 'Megs and the Vootball Kids' written by Neil Montagnana Wallace and … Mark Schwarzer. Either it's just an extraordinary coincidence that Schwarzer happens to like a book written by someone with the exact same name, or he is just really desperate to kick start a literary career.



Mark catches up on some reading while all the action takes place at the other end of the field.

Gossip and Transfer Speculation from the English Media...

Nwankwo Kanu's second-half goal saw Portsmouth into their first FA Cup final for 69 years as they beat one of his former clubs West Bromwich Albion 1-0 in the first of this weekend's Wembley semi-finals on Saturday.

Portsmouth, the last Premier League side left in this season's competition and who won the FA Cup for the only time in their history back in 1939, will now face another Championship side in either Barnsley or Cardiff, who play each other in Sunday's second semi-final, at Wembley on May 17.

The Cup final will see Portsmouth boss Harry Redknapp, who had guided the south coast club to sixth in the Premier League table before Saturday's kick-off, going for his first major honour as a manager.

"It's a great day for the club. It's great for my family and the supporters, I'm delighted for everybody," Redknapp said.

AC Milan president Silvio Berlusconi admitted on Saturday that he would love to sign Brazil's 2005 world footballer of the year Ronaldinho from Barcelona.

Berlusconi, who is presently bidding to regain power in Italy's general election, told Italian press agency Ansa that he believed Milan could acquire Ronaldinho, who even before he was ruled out for six weeks earlier this week had fallen out of favour at Barcelona with a series of disappointing performances.

"I hope yes, I believe yes," replied Berlusconi, when asked about whether Ronaldinho would come to Milan.

"We will try and buy him."

According to the Gazzetta dello Sport, AC Milan would be prepared to spend 20 million euros (31 million dollars) for the 28-year-old, whose contract runs till 2010 at Barcelona.

During the week Gazzetta had reported that there had been a meeting between Ronaldinho's brother and agent Roberto Assis with Adriano Galliani, the number two to Berlsuconi at Milan.

Ronaldinho has been at Barcelona since arriving in 2003 from Paris Saint Germain.

Sunderland manager Roy Keane revealed Saturday that he was still bitter over how he was treated before his exit from Manchester United.

Keane, one of United's most influential players, left Old Trafford by mutual consent in November 2005 after a prolonged absence with a foot injury, later joining Celtic.

It was a period of increasing tension between the former Republic of Ireland international and the management team, led by Sir Alex Ferguson.

And in an interview with the Irish Times, Keane claims he was told "certain things at certain meetings that were basic lies".

"The day I left United, in hindsight, I should have stopped playing really," he said.

"I lost the love of the game that Friday morning. I thought football is cruel, life is cruel.

"It takes two to tango also. I am fully responsible for my own actions but some things are wrong."

He claimed: "I left on the Friday morning and they told me certain things that day.

Liverpool's Finnish defender Sami Hyypia confirmed Saturday that he has agreed a deal to stay at Anfield until the summer of 2009.

Hyypia told the club's official website: "I am very happy to have agreed a new deal. This is a great club with fantastic supporters, so I'm delighted."

The towering 34-year-old, whose contract was due to expire at the end of the season, is now set to join a select band of players to stay at the club for a decade.

Hyypia has so far made 440 appearances since arriving on Merseyside from Dutch club Willem II in 1999.

Manager Rafael Benitez claims Hyypia is the best possible role model for young defenders such as Martin Skrtel and Daniel Agger.

"This is great news for the club," said the Spaniard.

"Sami has a lot to offer. He is a fantastic professional who is an example to all young footballers. He understands the game and is clever. All these things mean he can help other players.

"He has shown this year how important he is to us on the pitch and he can continue to do that next season."

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